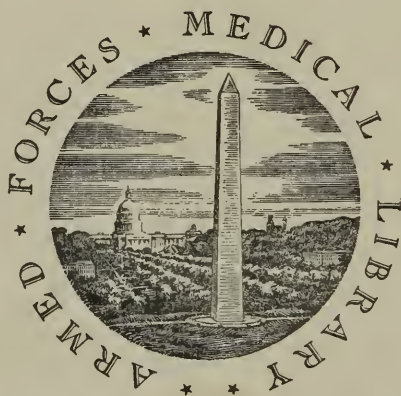


UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



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WASHINGTON, D.C.



Bayley (R.)

N. T. Ficker

LETTERS

FROM THE

HEALTH-OFFICE,

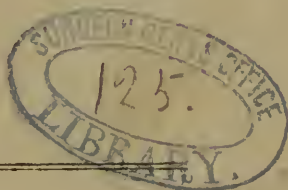
SUBMITTED TO THE

Common Council,

OF THE

CITY OF NEW-YORK.

By RICHARD BAYLEY.



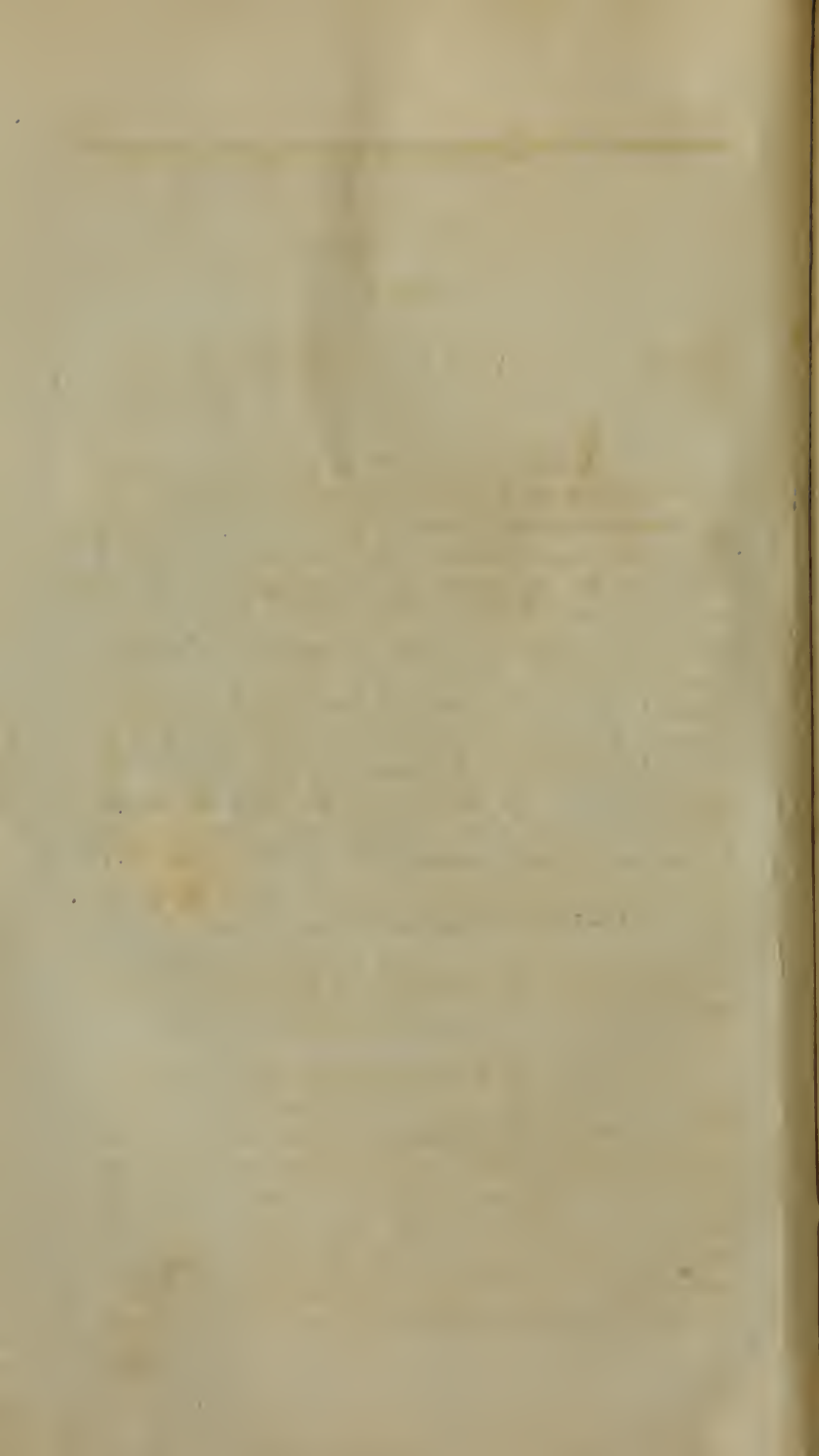
PRINTED BY JOHN FURMAN,

No. 102, Pearl-street, third door below the corner of Old-slip.

Advertisement.

THE following letters, selected from the records of the HEALTH-OFFICE, for the years 1796, 1797, and 1798, are respectfully submitted to the COMMON COUNCIL of the city of New-York; to which is annexed, a letter, wherein an attempt is made to explain why the PESTILENTIAL DISEASE of 1798, was more generally prevalent than in 1795, 1796, or 1797.

BY RICHARD BAYLEY.



Extracts from the Correspondence of 1796.

New York, July 1, 1796.

S I R,

IN the latter part of April last, I called on the Mayor of this city, and communicated to him a circumstance which I believed to be a very interesting one to the future health of the inhabitants of White-Hall and its environs, viz. That in filling up the wharf at the east side of the slip, they had already buried two dead horses, and at that period they were covering a third. Besides this, there were several hundred loads of street-dung, spread on the unfinished wharf: and that the place was in such a state of nuisance, that it eminently threatened the safety of the inhabitants. The Mayor replied, That he would have the necessary enquiries made. On the same day, I made a similar communication to Alderman Furman, and expressed a wish, that the Act for preventing nuisances should be attended to.

THE fact is, Sir, that part of White-Hall to the east of the slip, is in a most offensive condition.

THE crew of the ship Antoniette, from Copenhagen, which lies adjoining the nuisance above alluded to, and who cannot come on shore, or return on board, without crossing over the above ground, has sickened successively almost to a man. They have been sent to Bellevue, recovered, and on their return, have sickened again. The day before yesterday a man was sent to the Hospital—yesterday another—and this day two more have sickened; and I have no doubt

but their complaints are in consequence of exhalations, arising from the wharf.

THERE are a number of people sickening in the neighbourhood of White-Hall, and the alarm it has created, is too well founded. Nothing short of the removal of a quantity of street manure, and other offensive matter, which now lies on the wharf, and the wharf being covered over with clean gravel, earth or sand, intermixed with a quantity of lime, can possibly prevent the calamity which has already taken place, from extending its influence.

I have the honor to be,
With perfect respect, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
RICHARD BAYLEY,
Health-Officer.

His Excellency, }
Governor JAY. }

Staten Island. July 30, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

A REPORT prevails in the country, that the same Fever which proved fatal to so many of the inhabitants of New-York the last fall, has again made its appearance, and that the city, in consequence of it, has become very sickly. The disagreeable impression excited in the minds of the people by such a rumour, is, perhaps, increased by several paragraphs to the same purpose, which I am informed have appeared in the Philadelphia papers. In order, therefore, that I may be, in some measure, enabled to silence the fears of my friends, and to afford them the most satisfactory information upon a subject so important, I shall esteem it a favor if you will com-

municate to me a candid statement of the business; for I have no doubt, that unless the most conclusive means are soon adopted by some medical character of influence among you, the alarm, however unfounded, will obtain such credit, as to prevent the people in the Country from resorting in their usual numbers to the City.

With respect and affection,
I remain,

Your sincere friend,
RICHARD CHANNING MOORE.

R. BAYLEY. }

New-York, July 31st, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

IT is true that a Fever resembling the one which proved so great a scourge to our city last year, made its appearance again about White-Hall, and in the vicinity of the Exchange, about the middle of July; but I have solid reasons for believing that this complaint will not be extended beyond certain limits. You may recollect, that in the frequent conversations we have had together, on the subject of the last year's Fever, I have been uniform in my opinion as to the cause of its production, namely*, *the accumulation of every species of filth and perishable matter, on the low made grounds, on the south side of the city, and the abominable custom of filling up slips and docks with similar materials.* I have said that these causes, aided by a moist atmosphere and hot sun, could not fail of producing the most baneful exhalation.

* This sentiment attracted the notice of the ingenious Dr. Currie, of Philadelphia, who put the *liberal* construction on it, that the origin of the Yellow Fever in New-York, was attributed, by the *learned* Physicians of this city, to a little *deck mud*!

tions, and that their effects must necessarily be felt by those who were more immediately exposed to their influence.

THE proprietors of the lots on the East side of White Hall slip, carried out a bulk head the last spring, with a view to extend the dock further into the river. The dimensions of the dock are very considerable, and a maxim invariably adopted by the proprietors of docks, is, that *the cheapest mode of filling is the best*. Accordingly, carts were employed to collect such dirt and filth as all large, populous cities furnish in abundance, and with those materials was the dock filled up; and to add to the *salubrity* of the mass, there was occasionally added, dead horses, dogs, cats, hogs, &c.

THE exposure of White Hall, and indeed the whole of the West end of the city of New-York, must be considered as extremely healthy. The winds during the warm season, are generally from the Sea, and arrive to this part of the town uncontaminated, by passing over unwholesome grounds. Yet such is the fact, that the poisonous exhalations which have abounded in that quarter during the warm weather, have so changed the air, that the inhabitants on the South side of Pearl-street, between Old-slip and White-Hall, almost all concur in their testimony, that the disagreeable effluvia has frequently compelled them to close their windows, especially in the evening, on the South side of their houses; and, in several instances, have assured me, that the offensive smells have been such, as to occasion vomiting.

THE dock on which Mr. Delafield's stores are erected, is in a state truly execrable, and the slip on the right and on the left is little better. These, and such places, are visited by the Dock-Fever—the Yellow-Fever, if you please, that murderer of our own creating.

WERE the proprietors of these and such like docks, compelled to live on them, the evil would soon be remedied ; but people of this description are generally secure from the ravages of disease, enjoying the benefit of their rents in the cooler retirements of the country.

BUT, fortunately for us, from a concurrence of happy events, the dock-fever has entirely disappeared. It has continued for a short time only, when a gracious Providence sent us hard winds, repeated thunder and lightning, inundations of rain, and cool weather. To causes of this kind are we to ascribe the suspension of a formidable disease, which had begun to shew itself among us.

THE present exertions of our Common Council, in giving a new surface of wholesome earth to the dock of White Hall, will, without doubt, contribute to the same salutary effects ; and, if the same measures were extended to other parts of the town, there would be much less reason to apprehend a return of the Dock-Fever.

THUS, Sir, your questions are answered. You might have come to town with safety.—You *may* come to town with safety ; but I would advise you and all your country brethren, not to reside or sleep in the neighbourhood of filthy docks. New-York, as I have said before, may be rendered as healthy a city as any under the sun ; and when its baneful police is changed, and the nuisances with which the city abounds are corrected, you will hear no more of the ravages of particular diseases.

I am, &c.

R. BAYLEY.

Reverend Richard }
C. Moore. }

New-York, November 16th, 1796.

S I R,

THE Commissioners of Health have requested me to desire, that you would make your observations on the disorder that has prevailed in some parts of this city in the latter part of last summer, called a Billious or Yellow Fever; and to point out to them your opinion of the cause of the disorder; and, in particular, to shew why the report that has prevailed, of its being imported, is not well founded.

THE Commissioners would also be much obliged to you, to point out, in what respect the present law "for preventing the bringing in and spreading of Infectious Diseases into this state, is deficient, and what amendments may be made to it.

YOUR early attention to the foregoing, will much oblige the Commissioners, as well as

Your humble servant,

JOHN MURRAY,

Chairman of the Commissioners of Health.

Dr. R. Bayley. }

December 10th, 1796.

S I R,

I RECEIVED a letter from you, dated November 26, expressing a wish that I would furnish the Commissioners of health, with such observations as had occurred to me during the last summer and autumn, relative to the causes or origin of the disease, which occasioned so much alarm in this city, and which proved fatal to so many of its inhabitants; and that these observations might be accompanied with such reflections as I might deem proper relative to

nuisances, for the removal of which a law was passed by the legislature of the state, on the first of April, 1796.

As it regards the first request, I had fortunately made some progress in stating the principal facts, at the period of receiving your letter, which I have since completed, and which marked No. 1, is submitted to the perusal of the Commissioners.

I SHALL endeavour to perform the task assigned me, by making such reflections on the subject of nuisances, as circumstances may have given rise to.

IN the summer and autumn of 1795, a disease prevailed in this city, denominated from its nature and violence, the Yellow-Fever. The terror and dismay which it produced in all classes of Citizens, may be easily remembered; and the influence it had on the commerce of the city, and the number of lives it destroyed, are circumstances of too recent a date to be forgotten.

IN this distressing situation, application was made to the Medical Society of the state of New-York, to favour the Public with its opinion of the nature of that disease. The Society accordingly addressed a letter to the Magistracy upon the subject, (a copy of which is enclosed) containing remarks, among others, upon such nuisances, as appeared at least, to aggravate the then prevailing fever, and to render it more malignant and fatal; and to the influence of this letter, I presume we are to ascribe, principally, the act of the Legislature above alluded to, for the removal of these nuisances. Why a law of such magnitude has not been carried into complete effect, is a matter of surprize and regret among the citizens in general. A law was conceived to be necessary—every hand was raised for its enactment—and if, by the general expres-

sion, it was thought proper, it is much to be lamented that we have not experienced its salutary operation. How far otherwise, indeed, has it been? The vast accumulation of perishable matter at White-Hall, after the passing of the law, affording effluvia of the most noxious kind, and which from the clearest evidence, was the principal cause of the late sickness in that quarter, is a lamentable instance of inattention to what was so much the general wish !

THE law for the removal of nuisances, passed the 1st of April last, among many other things, respects, particularly, the manufactories of soap, candles, vellum and starch. But, unfortunately, these very offensive repositories remain exactly where they were ; and the annoyance which the neighbouring inhabitants have experienced from them, has been a subject of repeated complaint. They have not only rendered the situations of many, extremely uncomfortable, but there is reason for apprehending worse consequences, which the letter of Mr. Coles, accompanying these remarks, pretty clearly evinces.

It has been urged that the removal of the above nuisances, would be expensive to the citizens ; but a consideration of this kind, is surely not to be put in competition with our lives. I trust there are few indeed who would not cheerfully contribute to the execution of the law, both in letter and spirit ; and thus free a populous city of those causes of mortality, which are of a nature extremely active, and certain in their effect ; and which, if suffered to remain, may bring thousands to their grave.

PERMIT me further to add, that the calamitous situation to which we have lately been twice reduced, ought to stimulate our endeavours, and excite us to vigilance and care. Timely precaution may prevent a return of Yellow Fever in this city, or perhaps one of

a more pestilential kind: or, failing in that, it may alleviate their violence, and restrain their devastations.

It is true that diseases seldom become *Epidemic*, independent of a certain state of the air. We have experienced that state of the air and its effects, and we have no security against its returning even the ensuing season—And I cannot but believe that every good citizen will consider the inconveniencies to which he may be exposed, by the operation of the law upon the subject, as inseparable from the obligation and duty he owes to society; and he who willingly submits, may have this consolatory reflexion, that his acquiescence may have been the means of saving the lives of thousands, in guarding a populous city from the extreme miseries and fatality attending pestilential diseases.

I SHALL conclude with observing, that if my remarks have extended beyond what was intended to be understood by your request; or, if I have ventured further than I ought to have done, I hope that my anxiety to preserve the reputation of the city, and to promote the welfare and comfort of my fellow-citizens, will plead my apology.

I am, &c.

R. BAYLEY, *Health-Officer.*

John Murray, Esq. }
C. C. H. O. }

New-York, November 28, 1798.

S I R,

THE desire which your Excellency has expressed to see the causes of the late Epidemic

Fever investigated, has induced me to submit to your perusal the inclosed narrative.

I have the honor to be, most respectfully,
 Sir, your most obedient servant,
 R. BAYLEY.

BEFORE I undertake to account for the origin of the Fever, which made its appearance in this city in June last, I must be permitted to revert to certain facts and opinions contained in a work which I furnished to the public on the subject of a similar Fever, which prevailed more generally in this city, during part of the Summer and Autumn of 1795.

IN that publication it was stated, that the Fever was first observed in the neighbourhood of Fitch's wharf, in Water-street, and that it gradually extended from thence, in different ways, but more particularly in the direction of the prevailing winds.

NEAR where the Fever first began, there were several unfinished docks, which had been receptacles, for several years, of every kind of filth and dirt.—There was also, a considerable surface of new made ground in the neighbourhood, in a very unfinished state, upon which, dirt collected from the streets, was frequently thrown: likewise, several storehouses, erected on piles: and, added to these, a neglected and filthy state of the wharves. This representation, as it regards the then condition of the docks in that part of the town, is confirmed by the letter of Mr. Fitch, an extract of which is given in the publication above alluded to, and which, as it is much to our purpose, I shall again introduce. His words are, “Although the docks in the vicinity of the store which I occupy, may be less offensive than in many other parts of the city, yet, many of them are in a very exceptionable situation. The ponding of water, by running a bulk head across an unfinished dock, and

leaving the vacancy for several years to be filled up with every species of filth and perishable matter, is an object worthy the attention of the Police. The situation of the grounds between Water-street and Cherry street, is rendered very noxious, by Water-street being raised above a certain level, and thus preventing those grounds from being drained. The effect of such nuisances on the health of the inhabitants, in a crowded part of the city, cannot be imaginary."

THOSE who have perused that publication, will find a number of reasons assigned, why the inhabitants of the south east part of the city, would be particularly liable to Fever during the hot months. This opinion was warranted, in the first place, from matter of fact, as the Bilious Fever had appeared in that quarter for several years successively ; and, in the second place, as a matter of reasoning, from the relative situation and exposure of that part of the city.— But fortunately the south east part of the city has been more healthy this year, than for several years past ; and the causes of Fever seem to have been transferred to a part of the town, hitherto reputed little liable to any particular sickness.

IN investigating the causes of this change, a recourse to facts only, will afford a sufficient explanation.—

FIRST. THE docks spoken of, in the south-eastern part of the city, which were in so loathsome a state, have been completed and generally covered with a sufficient quantity of good earth, gravel or sand. The grounds have been drained, or, where that was not practicable, the surface has been rendered uniform with clean earth. The vacancies under the stores which were built on piles, have been filled up in a proper manner, and the wharves have been kept free from rubbish and filth. In short, so much care and industry have been bestowed here, to remove the nuisances that so generally abounded, that, where a person was

before almost suffocated with intolerable stench, one may now pass without experiencing the least offensive smell.

SECONDLY. LET us see what has happened at the south-west part of the town. Between the Whitehall and Exchange-ship, a new dock has been made, running on an average 60 feet into the river, extending 458 feet in front, and 9 feet in depth. If 9 square feet are calculated to be equal to a cart load, it will be found that 24,000 cart loads were necessary to fill up the dock, which were accumulating from July 1795 to July 1796. And what has been the nature of the materials employed for this purpose? It is difficult to answer the question, except in very general terms, namely, every thing subject to decay and corruption. One third of the substance of this dock may be computed to be lodged above the ordinary height of the tides—therefore 8000 loads of these perishable materials were exposed to the action of the hot summer sun. In the month of April of this year, I had frequent occasion to visit White-hall :—The stench which already issued from the dock, was highly offensive ; and on enquiring, I found that the matter which had been employed to make the new ground, consisted chiefly of the dirt which had been accumulating in the streets during the winter season ; and that, besides dogs, cats, hogs, &c. there had been actually two horses buried in the rubbish, which had died in the spring, in a small hovel, erected on the margin of this nuisance.

REFLECTING on this state of things at White-hall, and recollecting what had happened in another part of the city under similar circumstances, I found my mind strongly impressed with the probable consequences ;—and was led from thence to converse with several individuals of the corporation on the subject. But nothing material could be done to guard against the sup-

posed probable mischiefs. There was a contract* between the proprietors of the ground and other individuals, for filling in that dock, with which the magistracy did not think themselves authorized to interfere, unless it was declared to be a nuisance on oath, or by presentment of the Grand Jury. About the middle of June, the offensive smells arising from the new dock and other nuisances in the neighbourhood, were very generally observed in that quarter of the city, and their effects were manifest in many who complained of head-achs, sick stomachs, &c. &c.

THE situation of the Exchange slip, as a source of noxious exhalations I feel myself obliged to notice also particularly. This slip from its length and narrowness—from its being the receptacle of an extensive common sewer;—and, especially from having a great proportion of its muddy bottom exposed at low water, sends forth effluvia, which, in a very sensible manner, contaminates the air to a considerable distance around.

IN a letter published in July last, I had occasion to mention the frequent disagreeable state of the air in the south-west part of the city. It was there stated, “that the poisonous exhalations which had abounded in that quarter during the warm weather, had rendered the air so noxious, that the inhabitants on the south-side of Pearl-street, between the Old-slip and White-hall, almost all concur in their testimony that the disagreeable effluvia have frequently obliged them, especially in the evening, to close their windows on the south-side of their houses; and in several instances gentlemen have assured us, that the offensive smell has been such, as to occasion vomiting.” These are circumstances of great moment and are entitled to serious considerati-

* The above declaration will be found explanatory of most of the evils which this city has experienced from that period to the present. viz.—the interference of private contracts and private influence, in procrastinating from year to year, those necessary measures and regulations, which the welfare of this city demands should be carried into effect with promptness and decision.

on, if they are regarded only as causes which increase the malignity of diseases.

IN the latter part of June, the fever began to shew itself about White-hall, and in the vicinity of the Exchange; but it continued for a short time only, when the concurrence of high winds, heavy rains, much thunder and lightening, and cool weather, which happened about the middle of July, were probably the causes to which we may attribute the suspension of the disease. This, at least, was rendered probable, because as soon as the weather became warm and dry again, it was accompanied by those noxious exhalations which again produce the fever. Thus the disease appeared, went off, and came on again, according as the weather favored or impeded the generation of those vapors, which, in their operation on the human body, are the exciting cause of fever.

I MUST take notice of some other circumstances relative to many of the houses about White-hall, which, if they were not of themselves, in any instance a cause of Fever, must certainly be considered of a nature to aggravate the disease, when brought on by other causes—namely, the state of the ground in the rear of the houses, which, in consequence of the streets being raised, is, in many places considerably below the ordinary level, and therefore liable to accumulate matters which render the air impure, and which, in confined situations, are often the cause of Fevers.—Also, the old and decayed state of many of the houses, and the inattention to cleanliness, which is always neglected, where people of the poorer sort are much crowded together. The bedding and clothes of the sick under these circumstances, must be supposed to become more and more impregnated with the exhalations arising from their bodies; and hence the dreadful havock made by infectious diseases in the small houses of the poor, and on such as are destitute of the means of cleanliness,

and who, of necessity, are obliged to remain a length of time without changing their clothes.

THE further we enquire into the sources of the Fever, the greater is the analogy discovered to be, between the state of things at White Hall, and in that part of the city where the Fever first appeared last year. Accumulations of decaying animal and vegetable matters—a part of the ground below the general level—poor people crowded together in small uncleanly apartments, were circumstances so perfectly coincident, that were particular effects to take place in one situation, we should naturally expect similar effects to take place in the other. If the Fever of last year, and that of the present year, were brought on by the same causes, it may possibly be asked, how it happened, that in the one instance, it was so widely extended, and in the other confined to such narrow limits? This question admits of an easy solution. It is generally acknowledged, that Epidemic diseases are either produced or widely diffused, by some particular qualities of the atmosphere; and the extraordinary prevalence of heat and moisture in the air, during the Summer and Autumn of last year, must still be recent in the memory of the inhabitants of this city, while the state of the air, during the warm season of the present year, has been much cooler and drier than usual.

THUS, the Fever of the last year was more generally felt, because a peculiarity of the weather predisposed the body, or rendered it more susceptible of those causes which produced the disease: whereas, the weather of this year, occasioning no predisposition, the Fever was generally confined to a situation, where it required the exciting cause to be itself sufficiently concentrated to produce its effects.

MANY of the men who belonged to the market vessels which came to the white-Hall dock, sickened

from being exposed to the exhalations arising in this situation. The boatmen of the Staten-Island and Elizabeth-town Ferry-boats, suffered very generally, although many of them were so cautious as not to sleep on shore, and to avoid all communication with the sick. Several of them died of the disease.

MANY transient persons from Staten-Island, who frequently visited at Mr. Cortelyou's, residing at White-Hall, during their stay in New-York, sickened, and some died. It was said that Mr. Cortelyou's family were sick with the Yellow-Fever, but this report was not well founded. The family were not well during any part of the warm weather, but none of them had the Bilious Fever. Their complaints were such as are commonly the consequence of living in foul air, viz.—sick stomachs and head-achs, attended with considerable lassitude.

THE above facts respecting transient persons taking the Fever, are confirmed by Dr. Clarke, of Elizabeth-town, New-Jersey, who, in a letter with which he has favoured me, observes, “ There were many instances of this disease among the ferrymen, who resided chief of their time at White-Hall; and other persons who slept there, sickened, and all had taken their passage from White Hall dock within twelve days of the attack.”

It is worthy of remark also, that the disease, according to Dr. Clarke, occurred in those only, who had been in New-York.

HE writes that, “ Amongst the cases which came within my practice, and from the best information of others, there was no instance of the disease taking place in any except those who had been at New-York, and particularly at White-Hall.”

DR. CLARKE states further, “ That there was no

instance of the Fever amongst the nurses, or attendants upon the sick." This fact is confirmative of the opinion which we have always endeavoured to support that the Fever in question, is not a contagious disease. The operation of local causes in producing diseases, is well exemplified in the account of the Remitting and Intermitting Fevers of the West-Indies, given us by Dr. Hume :—" And while," says he, " The Hospital remained there (at Port Royal) the sick were seldom seized with complaints of this kind."

" WHEN another Hospital was built on the opposite side, though only at the distance of four miles, not one man in a hundred, escaped these Fevers, who were sent to the Hospital and remained in it three or four weeks ;—and even the marine guard, who were relieved once a fortnight or three weeks, fared no better."

DR. HUME describes the situation of this Hospital, to be in the neighbourhood of stagnant water marshes. He then adds, " It was the damp winds filled with the putrid exhalations, which occasioned the frequency of remitting or Yellow-Fever, and intermitting disorders of this place. At my request this hospital was deserted, although in all other respects it was good, and had cost near fifty thousand pounds sterling.—Several plantations near this hospital, were unhealthy from the same causes."

It would be endless to quote authorities upon this subject, nor is it necessary to look to a distance for them. What has happened within our own state, abundantly confirms the fact, as may be seen from Dr. William's letter, inserted in my publication upon the Fever of last year. I do not think it necessary to be more particular in reciting facts, or in detailing those circumstances which, in my mind, are fully competent to explain the origin of the Fever which has excited so much alarm, and proved so great a scourge

to the citizens of New-York. It is the less necessary, because I mean to shew, by the following documents, that the disease was not, as many have insinuated, nay positively declared, brought here from abroad : and if we can advance sufficient testimony to invalidate that opinion, the conclusion necessarily follows, that the Fever was occasioned by causes of a domestic nature ; and therefore, the fact we are solicitous to establish, receives that degree of probability, which, in matters of this kind, give an assurance, equal to demonstration.

I SHALL, then, in the next plaace, bring forward what appertains to the vessels supposed to have introduced the Yellow-Fever into New-York.

THE first suspected vessel was the ship Antoniette.

ON the 25th of May, the ship Antoniette arrived in this harbor from Brest, in ballast, and anchored in the North-River. Two days after her arrival, I was requested to visit sick on board. The Commander of the vessel assured me that the men had not been confined, nor did he think their indisposition such as to render it necessary they should be sent to the Hospital. One of the men was then at work on deck, and the other came from below immediately on being called. As, however, the ship was to be brought to a dock, it was thought expedient that these men should be sent to the Hospital.

THAT they had not complaints of an infectious nature, shall not rest on my assertion alone. The opinion and declaration of Dr. M'Farlin, under whose care they were placed, will carry with them much stronger evidence.

October 20th, 1796.

S I R,

“ I HAVE just received a few lines

from you, wherein you request me to declare my opinion respecting the nature of the complaints of the two patients from on board the ship *Antoinette*, who were sent to Bellevue Hospital, and placed under my care.

“ I do not at present recollect the names of those people, as I did not note the history of their complaints. Their cases, however, have not escaped my memory. The one complained of a pain in his breast, attended with cough and difficulty of breathing. His strength was considerably impaired—the complaint, which he attributed to cold, having been of some duration. By the application of a blister to the sternum, and the continued use of expectorants, he was discharged as cured from the Hospital.

“ The other laboured under a complete *Hernia Hermoralis*. By the use of mercurial frictions, faturine applications, the suspensary bandage, &c. he was relieved and discharged as such by his own request.

I am, &c.

“ JOHN M'FARLIN.”

To Doctor Bayley, }
Health-Officer. }

On the 29th of May, the *Antoinette* hauled to the dock at White Hall. In this situation, the crew could not come on shore, nor return on board, without passing over the new made grounds; and thus were the men exposed to the exhalations which arose from it whilst in the ship, and occasionally, in a greater degree, by their visits on shore. During the month of June, most of the men of the *Antoinette*, complained of an unusual weakness, and in the beginning of July, several of them were attacked with the Fever.

Two of these cases terminated in black vomit and death. The causes of the sickness on board the *Antoi-*

nette, being no longer a subject of conjecture, the remedy became obvious—namely, the removal of the vessel to a more healthy situation ; and as the ship had lain more than a month at White Hall dock, it must be supposed that the air beneath her decks had become completely saturated with the noxious vapours arising from that mass of decaying materials, of which the dock was composed.

It was deemed necessary, therefore, to have recourse to the measures commonly employed to purify vessels. For this purpose, the Antoinette was hauled out into the stream ; and after the process of purification was over, she was directed into the North river to take in her cargo. After this period, the men on board her remained in good health, except Captain Hendricks, who had the ague and fever.

Now, as the men who were complaining at the time of the arrival of the Antoniette, were not sick with fever (of which Dr. McFarlin's letter is sufficient evidence) and as the Fever did not appear among the crew, until five weeks after she had been at the White Hall dock, and more than ten days after it had appeared on shore, it must require a more than ordinary share of pre-possession in any one, to believe that the Antoinette had any agency in the origin of the Fever at White Hall.

On the 29th of July, the brig Patty arrived in this port. After her departure, a report was circulated, and by many credited, that she had introduced a Malignant Fever into this city. Although on this subject I had no doubt, as I had taken a manifest of the healthful situation of the brig Patty, and the crew had undergone my personal examination, yet I was anxious that every suspicion should, as far as possible, be removed from the minds of the citizens. I was therefore induced to write to the commander of the brig, who was then at Boston, to request he would

give me an attested statement of facts respecting such sickness as might have existed on board the brig during the voyage, and the condition of the health of her crew at her arrival in this port—whether she had any Fever on board after that period, or whether any person had sickened in Boston after her arrival there, who had had communication with her. To these enquiries I shortly after received the following attested certificate :—

“ THIS is to certify, that during my voyage in the Brig Patty, from Boston to the West-Indies, and back to New-York, none of my crew were sick of a malignant Fever ; and that at my arrival in New-York, all my crew were in good health, except my Mate, who was sick with the Ague and Fever, and who was taken out of my vessel and put on board a Packet to be sent home to Trenton ; and since my arrival in Boston, my crew has remained in perfect health as before ;—nor has any person who has been on board the brig Patty, received, or been apprehensive of any disorder whatever.

“ JOHN SNOW.”

“ August 3d, 1796.” }
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 }

THE above statement of Captain Snow, is so clear and conclusive, that still to entertain any doubt, would imply a mind disposed to condemn truth, even under the serious garb of a sacred oath !

THUS, then, I have taken a cursory view of the circumstances relative to the origin of the Yellow-Fever. In reviewing the situation of that part of the city, we have found abundant reason for believing the Fever was produced by causes of a local nature, and originating there. The importance of this fact renders me extremely solicitous that the truth of it should be generally established, and strongly impressed on every mind : for, if measures are to be pursued, cal-

culated to prevent the calamity in future, the extent and adequacy of those measures, must depend on this conviction.

IT is to be hoped, that we may not deceive ourselves, by a mode of reasoning adopted by some, which, however plausible it may appear at first view, must certainly prove fallacious on examination.

IT is urged, that the city of New-York has remained, for many years, exempt from any particularly fatal diseases ; and we have no greater reason *now*, to suppose ourselves more liable to sickness, than formerly ; and, that if diseases of a malignant kind, should, at any time, prevail among us, we ought to look to some foreign source for their origin. The answer to this argument is, that the state of things is every day changing. This city is extending its dimensions—the houses are becoming more compact and crowded together—the inhabitants are encreasing in number—and, more especially, the mode of making *new ground*, which renders a considerable part of the city a *low level*—are changes which place us in a situation different from that of any former period.

THIS kind of calculation, it is to be feared, is not by many entered into ; but it is one which is entitled to serious consideration, inasmuch as it takes in those circumstances which have a particular influence upon the health of the inhabitants of the city of New-York.

BEFORE I conclude, I must take the liberty of mentioning to your Excellency, what has hitherto been the condition of the Hospital lately erected on Bedlow's Island. I am induced to do this, in order that the inconveniencies under which it has labored, may be rendered apparent ; and from a hope that measures will, in consequence, be taken to provide for the

Hospital in such a manner as may be necessary to complete the establishment, and give it extensive utility.

THE necessary alterations and repairs which the buildings on Bedlow's Island required to render them fit to receive the sick, were not completed till the middle of August. As soon as these were done, application was made to the Commissioners of Health, for a supply of necessaries to accommodate the sick—who, at this period, were sent to the Hospital from White-hall, and from several vessels just arrived from sea. The Commissioners directed the beds and bedding which had been used the year before at Bellevue, to be sent to the new Hospital on Bedlow's Island. Unfortunately, these articles were in a very filthy state; but, as the sick were already at the Hospital, we had no alternative, but to select the cleanest of those articles and use them in that state. The Hospital was also unprovided with wearing apparel, than which, nothing is more necessary, as well for the comfort of the sick, as to prevent the introduction of infection into the Hospital.

UNDER these circumstances, the consequences were such as might naturally be expected; for, within eight days of the time in which these articles were brought to the Hospital, those people who had been employed in transporting the bedding from Bellevue, the nurses who attended the sick, and the steward of the house, were attacked with fever. The attending Physician, Monsieur Bouvier, was also indisposed for several days.

FROM this distressing situation, however, the Hospital was soon happily relieved, by a supply of beds, bedding, and such clothes as were necessary for frequent changes, and placing the sick in a state of the greatest cleanliness. From this period, neither nurse,

visitor, nor any kind of attendant, were known to be attacked with fever.

I have the honor to be,
With perfect respect, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
RICHARD BAYLEY,
Health-Officer.

His Excellency }
Governor JAY. }

*The following is a copy of the Letter alluded to in the
Letter addressed to the Commissioners of Health.*

TO the MAGISTRACY of NEW-YORK.

Gentlemen,

IT would be improper, at least foreign to the design of this address, to enter on the enquiry whether the late Epidemic which raged in this city, was imported, or generated among us. Our motive for addressing you at this time, arises from a desire to engage, and at the same time to assist, as far as we are able, your respectable Board, in applying a corrective to some of those causes, which, we conceive, served at once to extend its influence, and increase its malignity.

ON this head then, we venture to point out the following objects, as particularly demanding the notice of the Magistrates, and the interposition of their authority.

First, *the accumulation of filth in the streets.*

THIS, being composed chiefly of dead animal and vegetable matter, is, when exposed to a hot sun, a source of noxious effluvia, which have a tendency to

produce the most fatal effects ; and, that such effluvia have been the cause of Fever, has been confirmed by repeated observation and experience in all parts of the world.

Secondly. *Obstructed water-drains.*

THESE, by occasioning stagnant waters, and collecting matter of various kinds, which, undergoing de-composition, emit air of qualities extremely prejudicial to health.

Thirdly. *The ground of certain parts of the city, where the lots of houses are considerably below the ordinary level of the streets.*

IN such places, the necessary consequences must be an accumulation of various substances, which, under the influence of heat and moisture, putrify, and thus contaminate the atmosphere, and communicate properties to it, of a nature extremely deleterious.

Fourthly. *The situation of many of the Docks and Stores along the East-River.*

It is to be observed that in many places, large surfaces of mud are exposed at low water, which throw up during the heat of the summer, an intolerable stench ; and this evil is greatly increased by a practice of filling in docks with every species of filth collected from the streets, which proves an unfailing source of unwholesome air. We remark, further, that a practice has been permitted in this city, which we conceive very reprehensible, and what, we have no doubt, has produced many instances of individual disease, if it has done nothing worse ;—that is, the pernicious custom of collecting and throwing into one heap, great quantities of manure (gathered from the street) on vacant lots. This was the case (during the

prevalence of the Fever) at the head of George-street.

To the causes above enumerated, some others might, with propriety, be added, as endangering, by their permission, the health of the citizens.—Among these last, are, Slaughter-Houses, Manufactories of Soap and Candles, Vellum, Leather, Starch, &c.

In laying this detail before you, we cannot conclude without declaring, that in our opinions, the malignity and fatality of the late Epidemic Fever, were greatly influenced by the before mention causes; and were it necessary, we could superadd the authorities of the first Physicians and Philosophers, as corroborative of our own.

WE, therefore, with confidence and respect, submit the above to your serious consideration; and hope that their importance, as affecting the health and reputation of the city, will receive, as undoubtedly they claim, your early and due attention.

NEW-YORK, December 31, 1796.

May it please the Governor,

THE Commissioners of the Health-Office, having hitherto, as far as circumstances would admit, fulfilled the design of their appointment, conceive it proper, in the further discharge of their duty, now at the close of the year, to lay before the governor, an account of the manner in which they have executed their trust, of their expenditures therein, and, in general, of the situation of the public establishment under their care; together with such observations as have occurred to them on the subject of preserving and promoting the health of the city, and rendering

more efficacious the public provision for that purpose, and for the reception and accommodation of the sick.

THE Hospital at Bellevue, established by the Corporation of the city, had remained, since the preceding year, furnished for the reception of the sick, and offered, in the beginning of the season, a comfortable asylum to those who might arrive from sea, until the establishment under the authority of the state could be got ready. It was accordingly begun to be occupied for this purpose, in the month of June, from which time, to the 18th of August, the number of sick sent thither, was chiefly from vessels arrived from sea. In the mean time, the buildings on Bedlow's Island, purchased of the French, being given up by them, were cleaned and made ready to answer the purposes of a Lazaretto, and were furnished with beds, bedding, clothing, medicines, &c. and provided with a Physician, nurses, and other necessary attendants, and to which the sick at Bellevue, were removed about the 18th of August: And altho' from unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances, the accommodations there, were not so perfect as could have been desired, they were, by care and attention, rendered as comfortable and commodious as possible, and the place was visited by some of the Commissioners as often as occasion required. The number of sick thus received at the Lazaretto, from the 18th of August to the 1st of September, (the latest period at which any have been sent there) including those from Bellevue, was eighty-seven, of which seventeen have died: The greater part of this number had arrived from sea, and the remainder were inhabitants of the city, who could not find suitable accommodations at home.

THE Commissioners, at the recommendation of the Health-Officer, appointed to attend the sick, as Physician, Doctor Bouvier, a gentleman who had acquired

much reputation in a long residence and practice of Physic, in the French West Indies, and who hath fulfilled his duty with singular ability and attention, and with great success; and although the allowance made him of four dollars a day, during his attendance, is perhaps more than their scanty funds would afford, it was, in their opinion, not adequate to his time and valuable services; and they therefore think it just that he should receive such additional pay, as may be judged to amount to a reasonable compensation, and accordingly recommend him for that purpose.

THE Malignant Fever of the last summer and autumn, though for a time very alarming, yet was happily, in a great measure, confined to a district of small extent, and greatly limited in its effects, compared with that of the preceding year. It prevailed in the White-Hall and Moore-streets, and in Water and Front-streets and the South side of Pearl-street, from the Exchange downwards, and in the lower part of Broad-street.—The rest of the city was principally free from it, and in a healthy state; and the few persons who, in the other parts, were attacked with the Fever, could generally trace the origin of it to that infected quarter, or to *local circumstances*, in their particular neighbourhood. It appeared in two or three instances in the month of June, but did not cause alarm till about the middle of July, from which time to 1st of November, the number attacked with it was about 247, of which there died 67; of this last number 7 or 8 died at Bellevue, or Bedlow's Island, and are included in the return of deaths from thence.

ON this occasion, attention was paid to the timely removal of such patients whose circumstances rendered it necessary for their better accommodation, and to every other point in which, in the opinion of the Commissioners, they could contribute to the comfort and safety of individuals; and as far as their powers ex-

tended, to the restoring and preserving the health of the city.

THE Commissioners have found, that the facts stated in the representation of the *Health-Officer*, on the subject of this sickness, are just ; and it appears to them with satisfactory clearness, that the filthy and corrupt state of some of the *Docks and Slips* in the neighbourhood of the Exchange and White-hall, was the cause of the sickness ; and there is little reason to doubt, but that, if the state of the air in general, throughout the summer, had been favourable to the propagation of *infection*, it would have found, in various parts of the city, from *filthy and noisome manufactories*, neglected vacant lots covered with offensive matter, and dirty streets and lanes, an abundant supply of *noxious effluvia* to increase and spread its baneful influence ; and that the city would, in all probability, have suffered perhaps a more general and destructive calamity, than in the preceding year.

THIS impure state of things was obvious to all ; and it was hoped that our late severe experience would have stimulated to a complete reformation ; and that aided by the law “to prevent the bringing in and spreading of infectious diseases,” an effectual exertion would have been made to *remove all nuisances*, and place the city, in all respects, in a respectable and wholesome state. But the warm season arrived, and no measures of this kind were taken. The Commissioners presented to the Corporation, a representation of the state of the city, recommending a mode of cleansing and keeping the streets, &c. in good order, a copy of which was delivered to the Governor.

AFTER some time, several of the most offensive slips and docks were cleansed and filled up in a proper manner, and some new mode was adopted for cleansing the streets, which, however, proved but *partially* efficacious, being, in the opinion of the Commissioners,

far short of that recommended by them. But none of the *offensive manufactories* were removed—they all still remain—several of them in the most populous parts of the city, and are most *dangerous and disgraceful* nuisances; one of which appears from an affidavit of *John Collis*, referred to in a letter from the Health Officer to the Commissioners, to have occasioned the *sickness* of a whole *family*, and the death of one of its members. The continuance of this unhappy state of things, notwithstanding the aid of the law, and the representations on the subject, afford a *gloomy prospect* with regard to the future welfare of the city, especially as there is no hope of engaging the Corporation in vigorous and efficient measures for a complete reformation. The Commissioners are convinced that the principal members of that body, think justly and independently on this subject, and have been zealous in their endeavours to effect a change, and that several others are disposed to co-operate with them in the salutary work; but a majority have not been found willing to engage in those measures, at the risk of offending many of their constituents, and the consequent loss of their places; for, however obvious to all intelligent and liberal minds, is the necessity of placing and preserving the city in the most cleanly and wholesome state, yet a considerable number of the inhabitants are opposed to any new and extraordinary measures being taken for that purpose, from the contracted and erroneous considerations of encreased expence, partial inconvenience, or innovation.

THE measures necessary to place and preserve this city in a cleanly and wholesome state, are not difficult to ascertain. They are—to fill up all the docks and slips with clean earth, gravel, or sand, in such a manner as that the *muddy bottoms shall not be left bare at low water*; and also to complete the filling up with the same materials, all the remaining vacancies under the stores and about the wharves, and to prohibit the common dirt of the street, or any filthy or corruptive mat-

ter from being used for this purpose, or thrown into them ; to remove all such matters from the vacant lots or yards, in and about the town ; and where such are so situated as to receive the wash of the streets, or adjacent grounds, or retain *stagnant water*, that they be filled up with good earth, &c. that the water may run from them into the streets ; to provide 'effectually for cleansing all the streets, lanes, wharves, &c. at least twice a week, and carrying the dirt and rubbish immediately to a spot from whence it will be taken away in boats, without any delay, and to prohibit its being thrown elsewhere, and also to prohibit any filthy or corruptive matter or rubbish, from being brought out of houses, cellars, or yards, into the streets &c. except at the time the persons appear who are employed to take them away ; to complete the paving of all the streets, lanes, &c. and the entrances of the docks, wharves, and slips ; to provide that all the *water drains* be kept clean and free from obstructions, that no water may remain and *stagnate* in them ; and, to remove out of *town*, all manufactories which have a tendency to *infect the air with noxious effluvia*. These measures, carried into full effect, with the necessary regulations to prevent the introduction of disease from abroad, would, undoubtedly, preserve the city in as great a degree of healthiness, as it enjoyed in former years.

AND for the attainment of this most desirable end, the Corporation appear to be vested with sufficient powers ; but, unhappily, the capacity for accomplishing such important good, is rendered abortive by the prevalence of an improper influence over the majority, as stated above.

THE Commissioners are aware that this representation is made in *plain and strong terms* ; but as they are not only convinced of the truth of it, from their own observations, but also find themselves justified in it, from respectable authority, which cannot be doubted, they conceive that the importance of the subject re-

quires, that the evil should be fully understood, in order that the remedy, if any can be found, should be applied with the greater readiness and effect.

By order of the Commissioners,
JOHN MURRAY,
Chairman of the Commissioners of the Health-Office,
for the year 1796.

(A true copy.)

RICHARD BAYLEY.

AS correct an account as could be obtained of the number of people who sickened and died in the neighbourhood of White-Hall, in 1796, is annexed for two particular reasons:—1st. To shew that the devastations committed by that formidable disease, were limited to a few acres of ground:—2dly. and what is of equal importance, is, to shew that its fatality was in a ratio to the vicinity of the nuisance. From these facts, I would suggest the following question, viz.—If the Yellow Fever is to be considered as a contagious disease, is it not remarkable that it should have raged with a violence almost unequalled in so healthy an exposure as the south-west part of our city, and that the other parts of the city enjoyed, at least, a usual degree of health? This question cannot possibly, in my apprehension, admit of but one solution, and I would alledge that the temperature and disposition of the air during the warm season of 1796, was not favourable to the propagation of the disease generally.—As far as the poisonous exhalations arising from 24000 cart loads street manure, exposed to the influence of a hot sun, were distinguished by their offensive smell, so far their effects were manifested by the appearance of the disease and no farther.

MEMORANDUM

Of Inhabitants taken sick and died in the vicinity of the Exchange, from the 4th of July to the 10th of October, 1796.

In Water-street, from White Hall to Coenties-slip.

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
At Weffel Weffels'		1
Mr. Cooper's		1
George Remsen's	2	
John Duffie's	2	
William Humphrey's	1	1
Nicholas Van Antwerp's	1	
Mrs. Riley's	2	1
Peter T. Curtenius's		1
John M'Pherson's	2	
Samuel Abrams's	2	
Nathan Strong's		4
James Richardson's	3	
Patrick M'Laughlin's	4	
Thomas Martin's	3	1
John Jeremiah's	2	1
William Comb's	2	
Margaret Adams's	2	1
The French Consul's		3
John Currie's	2	1
Andrew Morris's		1
Samuel Shaddock's		1
	<hr/> 30	<hr/> 18

In Broad-street, from the Exchange to the dock.

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
At William Reeves's	2	
A French Boarding House		1
John Delamater's	2	

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
Samuel Gater's	2	
Jonathan Penny's	2	
Samuel Ackerman's	2	
Samuel Page's	1	
Mr. M'Cullen's	1	
Joseph Williams's	1	
Jacob Ludlum's	1	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	14	1

In White Hall street.

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
At Peter Perrine's	3	1
Peter Deremer's		1
Mrs. Shaw's		2
Elizabeth Hall's	4	1
John Flood's	1	3
Mr. Harrifon's	2	3
Jacob Corfhow's	1	
Peter Cortelyou's	5	
Mr. Deacon's	1	
Peter Hawk's	3	
John Jabine's	2	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	22	11

In Front-street, from White Hall to Coenties-slip.

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
At Jacob Remsen's	1	
James Stuart's	2	1
Captain Platt's	3	2
Mr. Adgate's	3	1
Spencer and Follet's	2	
William Thorn's	1	
James Robinson's	2	1
Patrick Cochran's	1	1
Denton and Suydam's	2	

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
William Denneman's	3	
William Bond's	3	
Israel Diffesway's	2	
Robert Rattoon's	1	
Mrs. Laboyteaux's	2	
Mr. Vandewater's	2	
Samuel Doughry's	3	
Doctor Mulenbright's	5	
William Corwin's	2	
James Duffie's	3	
James Richardson's	1	
John Anderfon's	2	
Isaac Wood's	4	
Mr. June's	4	
	<hr/> 54	<hr/> 6

In Moore-street.

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
At James Glasse's		2
John Thomson's	2	2
John Buddy's	3	2
Elizabeth Jackson's	1	1
Mrs. Mafon's	1	
Elizabeth Watson's	1	1
Margaret Ingram's	1	1
Mary Hogan's	2	1
Catharine Rofs's	1	3
John Campbell's		1
Mrs. Davis's	5	
Haines and Thomson's	1	1
David Dunham's	1	
Peter Pollyon's	3	2
John Hillyers'	4	1
John Tuttle's	1	1
Roome Bushett's	3	3

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
David Conklin's	3	1
Mr. Simmerman's	3	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	36	24

On White Hall Dock.

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
At Mrs. Dean's	4	1
Mrs. Day's	4	1
Samuel Gale's	6	4
Garrett Fountain's	2	
Mrs. Genea's	3	
Lawrence Hillyer's	1	2
James Lent's	2	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	22	9

SUMMARY.

	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
In Water-street	30	18
Broad-street	14	1
White Hall-street	22	11
Front-street	54	6
Moore-street	36	24
White Hall Dock	22	9
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	178	69

[*Conclusion of Correspondence for 1796.*]

Extracts from the Correspondence of 1797.

LETTER No. 3.

Health-Office, April 10th 1797.

TO THE MAYOR.

SIR,

THE deputation of the Common Council, consisting of Gabriel Furman, Jacob de la Montagnie, and Thomas Storm, Esqrs. have, with the Health-Officer, and Commissioners, inspected the situation of the streets, docks, wharves and slips, from Whitehall to New-market, on the east river. The various objects which, in their opinion, require the interposition and authority of the Common Council, will be the subject of a subsequent representation. At present the Commissioners (whose immediate duty it appears to be) beg leave to solicit your attention to such measures as may be best calculated to remedy the following existing evils, viz:—

NUISANCES of considerable magnitude are found on several vacant and open lots—particularly one next to the Circus in Broad-Way, and another at the corner of Broad-Way and Beaver-street. These we think ought to be inclosed to prevent a greater collection of filth and dirt.

THE surface of the streets at the head of the Old-slip

and Beekman-slip, want considerable raising with wholesome earth or gravel.

EXCHANGE-SLIP ought to be filled up so far as the Common Council have already determined :—Also Burling-slip on a range with the south side of Front-street, and the lot granted Messrs. Van Zandt and Carter, on the west side of it. This, in its present situation, is likewise a receptacle for all kinds of offensive filth.

THE Commissioners observe with regret, that adequate exertions are wanted to dig out White-hall, Coenties, Coffee-house, Fly-market, and Peck slips.—They beg leave, therefore, to name Mr. Thomas Hazard, as a suitable person to assist in the superintendence, and to press the execution of these important objects.

THE solicitude of the Commissioners to obviate the effects apprehended from delaying this business, will, they trust, be a sufficient apology for this present address.

With sentiments of respect
and consideration, I am,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,
JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 5.

Health-Office, April 24th, 1797.

TO THE MAYOR.

SIR,

I AM requested to inclose you the remaining observations on the situation of the streets, &c. alluded to in our letter of the 10th inst. The

Commissioners, tho' desirous of brevity in their communications, do not find themselves at liberty to abridge the present lengthy details; as, in their opinion, every object is of more or less importance to the general health of the city.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

RESIDUE of the observations on the situation of the Streets, Slips, Docks, &c. made by Gabriel Furman, Jacob de la Montagnie, and Thomas Storm, Esqrs. the Health Officer and Commissioners, on the 10th of April, 1797.

WHITE-HALL is very much incumbered with timber, brick and other lumber, and generally very filthy. The dock, east-side of the slip, wants paving, the new-made part of which to Exchange-slip, is, at least, one foot lower than the outer end and sides. The yards back of the new-built houses on it, are still lower, exceedingly filthy, and must become very offensive in the hot weather, unless filled up with wholesome earth or gravel, which the Commissioners beg leave to recommend to the attention of the Common Council.

THE lower end of Moore-street wants paving, as also the dock on both sides of Exchange slip, being almost impossible in their present state, particularly on Mr. Delasfield's side.

THE pavement east-side of Coenties slip, is in great disorder, and much broken up, which makes it exceedingly dangerous for foot passengers, particularly women and children passing by the loaded wood-carts.

The Commissioners, therefore, suggest the propriety of widening that dock four or five feet from the upper end to the south range of Front-street, by building a new tier of wood against the old dock, well anchored together, which will be a very moderate expence to the proprietor. Unless this be done, it cannot be made safe, nor suitably commodious for accommodating the business constantly transacted there.

MR. ASTOR's, and the adjoining vacant water lots, east-side of Peter Schenk's store, Cruger's wharf, require filling up, or digging out, as, in their present state they are receptacles of filth, and of course, great nuisances. The walks of Front-street, between Coenties and the Old-slip, are generally out of repair, and some lots totally unpaved. Cases of this nature are so numerous in Front as well as Water street, from the Old to the New slip, that it is almost impossible to mention each in detail. On this head, therefore, the Commissioners beg leave to suggest the propriety of an ordinance, embracing the walks and streets of the whole city, unless such does already exist; for, without they are repaired, it will be almost impossible to keep them decent.

THE same general remark must suffice with regard to filling up all the lanes and alleys leading to the wharves on the east river, from Coenties slip to Kip and Laurence's alley, above the foot of Dover street.

THE west side of the dock, at the Old slip, requires paving, and the east side both filling up and paving. At present, *that* also is almost impassible. The yards, rear of Blaze Moore's and Nevin Wilson's stores, Front street, are sunken, filthy nuisances, and the buildings on them fronting the river, tho' small, are considerably on the street.

HERE, the Commissioners beg leave to particularize a few more of the most important nuisances of that

description, on the east river, which ought, at least, to be covered with wholesome earth or gravel.

UNDER the new wooden buildings of William Byron, at the Fly-market slip—the stores of John Jackson, and those on the estate of Leffert Lefferts, at the lower end of Fletcher street (which street requires raising and paving, being at present a perfect mud-hole). Also under the store lately occupied by Knox and Briggs, corner of Burling-slip, Front street, in which the yellow fever originated last spring. Under the store, west side of Peck slip, corporation property.—Also under the corner store, on the east side, and the rear of Thomas Burling's and John Thurman's lots.—Likewise, Saml. Ackerly's lot, and under John Dickenson's house. The two last mentioned are already very offensive, and will soon become dangerous.

THE remaining sunken lots and yards throughout the town, particularly on the east side from Whitehall to Catharine slip, are so numerous, and thought such great sources of unhealthiness in the hot season, that the Commissioners are much at a loss what to say on the subject of filling them up, as such an undertaking must prove very inconvenient to numbers of houses, and be attended with immense expence, which many of the occupants are at present but illy prepared to bear.

THE docks on both sides of the Coffee-house and Fly market slips, want paving. Front-street, from the east side of Burling slip to Peck slip, requires regulating, filling up and paving: Almost the whole, in its present state, being a perfect nuisance. If this great object be effected, it will compel a number of proprietors of lots and buildings in that quarter, to fill up; by which means many filthy and sunken places, will be so far covered, as not to produce evils in hot weather, which otherwise, in the opinion of the Commissioners, may result.

THE dock on the west and east side of Peck slip, requires paving : and the wharves in front, on the east side regulating and filling up. Both sides of James' slip, want paving ; also the lower end of Oliver street from Cherry street. Catharine slip wants some digging out ; and the dock on the west side of it, as well as Catharine market, require paving.

MAGAZINE, Augustus, Little Ann and Barley streets require a regulation and great improvements. In the district of these streets, there are two large ponds of stagnant water, which, with the noxious factories may render them a source of disease in hot weather, and are therefore, objects that require timely attention.

THE lower ends of Rector and Carlisle streets leading from Greenwich street to the North river, want considerable raising, being at present sunken miry places, and impassible.

THE large square in front of the new Albany basin, and the dock on each side, require paving. Some pavement also is wanted at the foot of Cortland street ; and the slip at the foot of Dey street, should be filled up.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 18.

Health-Office, May 22d, 1757.

TO THE MAYOR.

S I R,

THE Commissioners have requested me to deliver you the annexed list of lots, &c. on the low grounds along the east river, and its vicinity, some of which are at present offensive, and great recepta-

cles of filth ; and respectfully suggest the propriety of directing them to be immediately filled up.

SUCH other nuisances as they may, from time to time, discover, and which will require the authority of the Common Council to rectify, will be reported.

I have the honor to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,
JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

THE estate of Jacob Walton's, Thomas Randall's, Theophylact Bache's and Carlisle Pollock's lots ; all in the rear of Front-street, between the Old slip and Gouverneurs' alley, want filling up twenty-five or 30 feet in length.

THE estate of Joseph Griffith's and part of Joseph Hallett's lots, rear of their stores in Front-street, facing the river, between Gouverneurs's alley and the Coffee-house slip, want raising with wholesome earth.

SAMUEL Thurston's, John C. Freak's and Elizabeth Stillwell's lots, on Fletcher-street, require so much raising with good earth, as to cast the water into that street.

THE cellar of a house occupied by William Simmons, and another now or lately occupied by Archer Peliren and Co. fronting on Fletcher-street, between Front-street and the river, are offensive places, and require filling up with wholesome earth.

JOSEPH Winter's and Samuel Thorne's two lots in the fifth ward, Water-street, facing the river—also, John Moore's in the third ward—all want filling up.

Two lots of Samuel Ackerley's and Arch. Gracie,

fourth-side of Water-street, in the fifth ward, want filling—but it cannot be conveniently done, unless the Common Council order Rosevelt slip to be filled up.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 27.

Health-Office, June 27th, 1797.

(*Extract.*)

TO THE MAYOR.

SIR,

“ AS the low grounds on the East river, South of Pearl-street, have hitherto been very much the seat of disease, in summer, the Commissioners are resolved to pay particular attention to their cleanliness; and will, as soon as possible, submit to the consideration of the Common Council, some regulations to prevent so great an accumulation of dirt and filth in that part of the city. They think, that Mr. Hazard will be a suitable person, as well for this purpose, as to prevent the landing and storing of damaged hides, coffee, and any other articles of that kind, in a perishable or dangerous condition. They propose, therefore, that his attention should be turned to these objects, immediately after completing those in which he is at present engaged.”

JOHN OOTHOUT.

No. 30.

Health-Office, June 26, 1797.

TO THE MAYOR.

SIR,

THE Commissioners in their letter of the

5th inst. requested, that as soon as Mr. Hazard had completed the objects he was then engaged in, of cleansing slips with the machine, he might be employed in the superintendence and care of cleansing and removing the dirt and filth from the piers, docks, &c. of the city, from White Hall to New-slip, on the East river. This is meant to be done agreeably to some arrangement in contemplation, whereby the proprietors shall bear a proportion of the expence, with the public, if possible. The Commissioners think it most advisable to discontinue taking any more dirt out of the docks for the present. If their opinion concurs with that of the Common Council, they beg that Mr. Hazard may be directed to take charge of the other object under the immediate direction of the Commissioners, during the time this service may be judged necessary, and to receive his daily pay from them, which is understood to be twelve shillings.

IN addition to the places already represented in disorder, the following require the interposition of the board.

Peter Goelett's and John Delafield's side walks, each side of Exchange Slip, ought to be made without delay.

THE L. from the Old to the new Albany pier, at Coenties Slip, wants filling up with gravel or other solid materials.

THE front of Robert Watts's lots facing the River, East side of Fly-market Stairs, where the Ferry House stands, is in a state highly exceptionable, and requires considerable raising to cast off the water.

THE Alley leading from Peck Slip, between Water and Pearl Streets, is in a state of great nuisance, and requires filling up, so as to cast the water into Peck Slip. The proprietors are Thomas Ellison, Samuel

Farinar, Benjamin Mott, William Minturn, and others.

James and Catherine slips are also in a state of great nuisance. The Commissioners, though averse to filling up slips (if even it were optional with them) from a knowledge of their public utility, are at a loss what else to advise in the present case, to remedy the evils that may arise from the condition of these two. They conceive, however, that James's slip, as far as it runs bare, and Catherine-slip, as far as the North side of Water-street, ought to be filled up.

THE lower ends of Chamber and Murray-streets, on the North river, are in great disorder, and require regulating and filling. The rear of Mr. Strachan's lot, and Mr. Rhineland's adjoining it, on Washington-street; and the lower end of Robinson-street, from Greenwich-street to Washington-street, want filling.

THE pavement in Front-street, and the side walks from the Old slip to Gouverneur's alley, particularly, are in such disorder, that it is impossible to get them kept decent and wholesome without repairs. This leads the Commissioners to express their regret that so little attention has been paid to the streets and walks generally, where so much is wanted.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 35.

Health-Office, July 17th 1797.

TO JAMES KENT, Esquire, *Recorder.*

(*In the absence of the Mayor.*)

SIR,

IT is with regret that the Commissioners are compelled to trouble the Common Council so fre-

quently. Their duty, however, obliges them to represent, without loss of time, that Burling-slip is at present in a state of very alarming nuisance; and that, from the constant accumulation of dead animals, offals and other perishable substances, which lie putrifying on the mud and stagnant water within the Bulk-head, it is hourly becoming more so. They, therefore, beg the Common Council will order that the filling up (which appears to be suspended) may go on, and be speedily completed.

THEY further remark, that the mode of filling this slip, is similar to that observed last summer at the White-Hall, which, in its consequences, was so fatal to the neighbourhood; and their solicitude with respect to the object of their present application is heightened by reflecting that the Yellow-Fever first made its appearance the past year, in this neighbourhood.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 36.

HEALTH OFFICE, August 19th, 1797.

TO THE MAYOR,

S I R,

REPRESENTATIONS have been made to the Commissioners, that danger of sickness is apprehended from the unfilled lots, late the property of Ireland, in the 6th ward. These lots at present contain a great body of stagnant water, and are common receptacles of filth and dead animals. The inclosed list of names has been furnished by one of the proprietors of this ground, who expresses an earnest wish to fill up immediately.

SENSIBLE that the exertions of any one willing individual, will be of little avail in a nuisance of such magnitude, the Commissioners beg the Common Council will direct each to do his respective part, without delay.

THE Commissioners take the liberty to remind the Board, that Mr. Delafield has not yet filled under his stores at Exchange slip, which they think *ought* to be done.

THE rear of Robert Bowne's and the late Messrs. Bruce's lots, at the foot of Pine-street, are at present in a state of nuisance, being receptacles of rubbish and filth of every sort, and require to be dug out, so as to be under cover of the water.

I am, respectfully,
Sir,

Your most obedient servant,
JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

Health-Office, New-York, August 21st, 1797.

To the Commissioners of the Health-Office.

GENTLEMEN,

THE ship *Shepherdess*, commanded by Isaac Hand, arrived in this harbour yesterday.

MR. PARKER the person appointed by the Commissioners to inspect all vessels arriving in this port from the southward of Cape May, in pursuance of his duty, hailed the *Shepherdess* on her way into port, and enquired the state of health of the crew. They re-

turned for answer, that all was well. Determined, however, for certain reasons, to obtain more particular information, he boarded her, and made enquiries of the pilot, William Berwick, and of the mate, with respect to the health of the people, and was told there was no sick on board.

AT eleven o'clock this morning, I received a written notification, that a man, supposed to be sick of the yellow fever, was lodged back of No. 30, Pope's alley, Rutgers' street. I repaired to the place, and found a Mr. William Moses, who had, the preceding evening, been landed from the ship *Shepherdes* from Savannah. On examination I found him in the last stage of the yellow fever.

IN pursuance of the trust reposed in me, I went immediately, and lodged the necessary information with the Alderman of the ward, Mr. Jotham Post, after which I proceeded to the ship, and requested the master, Mr. Isaac Hand, to place colors in her shrouds, remove her from the dock immediately, and bring her to anchor on the ground assigned for quarantine.

ON enquiry, it appeared that William Berwick, a pilot, conducted the *Shepherdes* into port, and to the wharf. On being desired by the Captain to remove her into the stream, and to the quarantine ground, he equivocated, hesitated, and behaved otherwise improperly.

AFTER having given directions as stated above, I left the vessel with colors in her shrouds. Some time after, William Berwick, the pilot, damned the colors, took a knife from his pocket, and ordered them from the shrouds—a boy accordingly took them down.

Two hours after my first visit, finding the ship had not dropped down to the quarantine ground, I return-

ed to her, and found the colors lying on deck, and the ship lashed to the wharf.

With much respect, I am,
GENTLEMEN,
Your humble servant,
R. BAYLEY, Health Officer.

August 23d, 1797.

To the Health Officer.

MR. AKERMAN reports to me this moment, that a sick man was yesterday brought by sailors in a coach to a public house, between Nos. 1 and 3, Ann-street, kept by Henry Rice, and lodged there, which has greatly alarmed the neighbourhood.

JOHN OOTHOUT.

Report of the Health Officer.

RIGBY, a sailor, is the person alluded to.— He belongs to the ship Atlas, lately arrived in the port of New York from Ireland. His complaint is fever, attended with symptoms neither malignant nor otherwise dangerous or interesting.

R. BAYLEY, Health Officer.

September 6th, 1797.

To the Commissioners of the Health Office.

GENTLEMEN,

Not being acquainted what method is to be pursued in cases of contagious diseases, when

there are no public meetings or places appointed to receive information concerning them, has been the cause of some hours delay in reporting the case of Mr. Burchill, which I am of opinion, is yellow bilious remitting fever, as described by authors, similar to what has prevailed in this and other cities, for this some years past, and is considered to be contagious. Mr. Burchill is to be found in Front-street, between Beekman and Burling slip.

I am, &c.

ANTHONY L. ANDERSON,

Corner of Pearl and Chatham street.

From the Health Officer to the Commissioners.

GENTLEMEN,

ON receiving the letter directed to the Health Commissioners from Dr. Anderson, I visited Mr. Burchill agreeably to the sentiments you expressed on the subject.

I FOUND him laboring under symptoms characterizing a high grade of bilious fever. The late hour of the night was very unfriendly to a particular examination of the color of his skin. On repeating my visit this morning, his face, neck and chest, had assumed a deep yellow tinge. This circumstance renders his complaint unequivocally that species of fever generally denominated Yellow Fever.

Mr. BURCHILL lives about mid-way on the left hand side of Front-street, between Beekman and Burling slip, nearly opposite where Mr. Briggs of the house of Knox and Briggs, died early in the spring of 1796, of yellow fever, before that disease made its appearance at White-hall.

THE part of Front-street alluded to, has been in an unfinished state for several years past, and is perhaps as dirty and filthy a spot as any in the city. It has been repeatedly represented to the Common Council.

I am, with much respect,
Your most obedient servant,
R. BAYLEY, Health Officer.

September 12th, 1797.

Memorandum.—Mr. Joseph Taylor, No. 158, Fly-market, reports, that Stephen Kelly, who arrived in the Bellona, Captain Croker, from Savannah, lies ill at his house.

JOHN OOTHOUT.

Memorandum.—The above being handed to the Health Officer, he called to see Kelly, found him ill of yellow fever, and conveyed him to the hospital, Bedlow's Island.

Health-Office, September 19, 1797.

(11 o'clock.)

TO THE HEALTH-OFFICER.

SIR,

Dr. AMASA DINGLEY reports, that Mr. Havens, of the ship Hare, from St. Ubes, lies sick of Yellow Fever, at Mr. Baker's, No. 19, Roosevelt-street, and that he has had no communication with any of the Southern ports.

JOHN OOTHOUT.

September 19, 1797.

(2 o'clock.)

SIR,

I HAVE visited Mr. Havens, at No. 19, Roosevelt-street. He lies ill of Yellow Fever, as the letter of Dr. Dingley specifies, and must die in a few hours.

I am, &c.

RICHARD BAYLEY, *Health-Officer.*

Mr. John Oothout, &c. }

Memorandum.—He Died.

New-York, September 23d, 1797.

TO THE COMMISSIONERS.

THE alarming situation of the inhabitants in George-street, near the Ship Yards, particularly the lower part, obliges me to lay their case before you, and entreat your speedy attention to that end of the city, that the rest of our citizens may not be infected with the malignant disease, which prevails there at this time, and which, in all probability, has there originated from the filth and stagnant water.

THE houses, the lower rooms of which are three or four feet under ground, are mostly occupied by poor people ; and such numbers are crowded together, that it is impossible to keep their apartments in such state of cleanliness as is requisite for their health. It is needless to enlarge on the subject. I hope, gentlemen, these hints will induce you to take a view of the place, and be yourselves witnesses of the general distress.

I remain, with respect,

Your most obedient servant,

PETER FAUGERES.

New-York, September 28, 1797.

To the Commissioners of the Health-Office.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM very sorry in having occasion to inform you, that I was this forenoon called to visit a gentleman from Norfolk, in Virginia, who is ill of Fever, in the Hotel-Coffee-House.

THIS young man passed through Philadelphia on Sunday last, was taken unwell yesterday, but was able to walk out this morning. I found him under pretty high Fever, accompanied by those symptoms, which, at this season of the year, give suspicion that it may assume a more formidable complexion. Finding him in such circumstances, I have attempted the most decisive practice with him ; and though I consider him a good deal relieved, I cannot take upon me to say that the advantage gained will eventually ensure his recovery ; nor is it my province to determine how far it will be proper to allow him to remain where he is. He wishes much to be permitted to take a chance at his present lodgings, until to-morrow.

I am respectfully,

Gentlemen,

Your most humble servant,
JAMES TILLARY.

October 7th, 1797.

DOCTOR VARICK reports, that captain Jones, at Mr. James's, east Rutgers-street, 2 or 3 doors from Lumber-street, is ill of Bilious remitting Fever. He arrived from *Baltimore* last Monday evening.

October 7th, 1797.

JAMES GREATON reports, that Mary M'Donald is ill of Fever, at No. 64, George-street, and destitute of the common necessaries of life.

Memorandum.—She was conveyed to Bedlow's Island.

October 21.

MR. HAZARD, keeper of the gaol informed the Commissioners, that two sailors were sick there; and Dr. William M'Intosh certified, that the said men, viz. *Robert Fall* and *William Latham* were in the stage of Typhus, or Yellow-Fever.

Memorandum.—They were removed to Bedlow's Island.

No. 38.

Health-Office, October 23, 1797.

TO THE MAYOR.

SIR,

WHEN the Commissioners of the Health Office entered on the discharge of the important trust reposed in them, they felt solicitous that nothing should be wanted on their part, to accomplish the objects of their appointment.

WITH this view, they have frequently been led to address you, on the subject of the numerous nuisances,

which existed in various parts of the city ; and they acknowledge the readiness with which the Common Council have interposed their authority for the removal of them. But, tho' much has been done, much more remains to be done. The object of the present address is, to call the attention of the board, to a subject which, in the opinion of the Commissioners, is of great moment to the future welfare of the citizens.

THE experience of the past summer and present autumn, as it regards the operation and effect of the *system of cleanliness* introduced last spring, has convinced the Commissioners that it is practicable to a still greater extent. That it meets the general approbation of their fellow-citizens, is a pleasing fact : and, that our exemption from diseases incident to the season, ought, in some measure, to be attributed to it, is acknowledged. The few cases of yellow fever which have occurred during the past summer, were mostly on the borders of the east river, and originated in situations where *nuisances continue to exist*.

WITH these impressions, the Commissioners beg leave to represent to the Common Council, the necessity of directing by an ordinance, all the proprietors of water-lots, especially on the East river, to fill them up with solid materials, so that the whole extent of ground already granted, may be completely finished by the first of May next, at farthest.

OF whatever magnitude this proposal may at first sight appear, in its effects on the convenience or interests of individuals, the benefits contemplated are incalculably great to the city in general : that is, the removal of those causes which may contribute to aid the return of pestilential diseases in the city.

DESIROUS as the Commissioners are, that the experiment thus far successfully attempted, of obviating disease by cleanliness, may be more fully tried, and

convinced that the Common Council is disposed to concur, in the same important object, they have only further to solicit their serious attention to this application, which is made at so early a period, with a view to afford ample time for carrying the proposed regulation into complete effect

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,
JOHN OORHOUT, Chairman.

Bedlow's Island, Nov. 10th 1797.

To the Commissioners of the Health-Office.

GENTLEMEN,

THE inclosed report contains a particular account of the number of sick which have been sent to the Hospital on Bedlow's Island, from August the 25th, the period when I took charge of that institution, to the first of November, 1797.

AFTER having thus far acquitted myself on the score of obligations, my inclination prompts me to lay before your Board, some remarks on the numerous inconveniencies which I have had to contend with during my residence on the island,—inconveniencies which have not only rendered the situation of the sick, in many instances, very uncomfortable, but have also, greatly contributed to render the medical treatment of them less certain.

It was early in the spring discovered, that the buildings on the island, were very illy calculated for the accommodation of the sick. The few alterations and improvements which were made during the season, served the purpose of immediate exigency only, and were by no means calculated to defend the sick against the inclemencies of the weather, which necessarily

take place at this season of the year—inconveniences with which they are at this moment contending.

ONE building only was intended for the reception of the sick, which in the course of the season, was found incapable of lodging the whole: and altho' another was fitted for the purpose, the want of separate apartments, made it necessary to mix together, persons of all classes and descriptions, of different sex, and laboring under different diseases, and in all the various stages of their diseases.

NOTHING is more necessary in the treatment of the sick, than that the orders of the Physician should be faithfully performed, the better to enable him to render practicable the execution of his object. Yet such has been the state of things, from the mixed and various employments of the nurses, as to render it impossible in some instances, to carry into effect those measures which suggested themselves to me as necessary to promote the recovery of the sick.

As a counterbalance of the foregoing short unpleasant narrative, I shall proceed to make a few remarks of a more satisfactory nature.

THE liberal supply of linen, bedding, &c. &c. &c. which has been furnished for the use of this institution, has enabled the attendants to keep the sick in a state of compleat cleanliness. The result has been, that notwithstanding the many instances of Yellow-Fever, which have come under my care since my residence on this island, some of which possessing a degree of malignancy scarcely to be exceeded, there is no instance in which the disease has been communicated to nurses, attendants or visitors, nor to the boatmen who have conducted the sick to the island.

IF from the want of opportunity hitherto, I had not made up my mind on the real character of the

Yellow-Fever, I should now have no more hesitation in attending the sick laboring under this disease, than in other entrances of Fever, without fear of receiving infection, provided due cleanliness and ventilation were observed.

I am, with great respect,
Gentlemen,
Your most obedient servant,
SAMUEL OSBORN.

From the Health Officer to the Governor

Health Office, Dec. 1, 1797.

S I R,

THE correspondence which I had the honor of holding with your Excellency, has been on a subject which yields to none on the score of public utility.

THE patient attention and ready assistance, which you have always bestowed upon it, emboldens me to trouble you on the present occasion, and inclines me to believe, that the vouchers which have been lately submitted to your inspection, have, as well as others, extremely interesting to the citizens, received a share of your attention. Feeling myself in a situation of great responsibility as it relates to the health of the city, it appears to me that I cannot be too particular in details which fix the PUBLIC ATTENTION, by adducing facts calculated, at once, to detect error and establish truth.

THE first representation that was made by the Commissioners of the Health Office, to the Common Council of this city on the subject of nuisances, was in the latter part of March, 1797. It is to be observed, that these nuisances were found too numerous to be all removed in one season. The Common Council,

therefore, issued their ordinances for the removal of those only which were conceived to be of the greatest magnitude. And while individuals were employed in fulfilling the orders of the Magistrates, the Commissioners divided the city into districts, to each of which a superintendant, and a suitable number of scavengers were appointed, who engaged to see that their respective districts were swept and properly cleansed twice in each week. By means of these arrangements, the most salutary effects were produced, insomuch that it has since been a common remark, that the city, during the last summer, has generally been free from those disagreeable effluvia, which before, especially in particular situations, rendered the air almost unfit for respiration. To these regulations may fairly be ascribed in a great degree the universal health of the inhabitants during the sickly season.

THE first communication that was made to the Commissioners on the appearance of malignant fever in this city, was by letter from Dr. Anderson, dated September the 6th. This letter was followed by others of a similar nature from different gentlemen of the faculty. The measures which were in consequence pursued, were such as were judged best calculated for the recovery of the sick, and the safety of their attendants.

IF, on examination, the sick were found accommodated in such a manner, as to allow of due cleanliness and good air, they were suffered to remain with their friends ;—on the contrary, if they were in crowded and confined habitations, where ventilation was impracticable, it was thought expedient to remove them from the city. Here it is worthy of remark, that the instances of malignant fever which occurred in different parts of the city, had their origin in the neighbourhood of a nuisance, which had been reported to the Corporation early in the season.

ON the 23d of September, a letter was addressed

to the Commissioners from Dr. Faugeres, representing that the people in George street were sickening. The Commissioners, in consequence, were led to inquire what were the probable causes of disease in that quarter. On examination it was found that the houses in that part of the street where the fever prevailed, were composed of small apartments, with cellars eight and ten feet under ground. In these were crowded together people of a description truly unfortunate, whose circumstances and manners exposed them to all the diseases incident to poverty and intemperance. To this unfailing source of the cause of malignant fever, was added the manufactory of a Skinner in the same street, the emptying of whose vats threw such a quantity of noxious vapours into the atmosphere, as proved a great annoyance to the whole neighbourhood. On the 20th of September there were eleven persons sick within sixty yards of each other, in George street, five of whom died in twenty-four hours after I had made my first visit, at the request of the Commissioners.—The measures which were adopted in this instance, were to bury the dead without any unnecessary delay—to cause the rooms of the sick to be thoroughly cleansed, ventilated and white-washed, and the attention of cleansing and ventilating was also paid to the bedding and clothes of the deceased. Lime was also furnished for the use of the indigent in the neighbourhood, whose families had not suffered from disease. By these means your Excellency may be assured, that the result was gratifying to the finest feelings of humanity. In the course of a few days, the people of George street were delivered from a calamity which threatened soon to become extensive, and were restored to as healthy a state as usual.

IN the course of the season it happened that several persons were seized with fever, who had but a short time previous, arrived from Philadelphia. The conduct of the Commissioners was on these occasions similar to that which they observed with respect to our

own citizens. If they found the sick so situated as to enjoy all the advantages of cleanliness and good air, they were left under the management of their respective friends and Physicians : if otherwise, they were removed from the city. Hence, in all human probability, it happened, that there was no instance of communicated infection. This was particularly remarkable in the cases of Messrs. Suydam, Havens, Burchill and others, with whom the intercourse of friends was never restrained ; and though their diseases were distinctly marked, and of the most violent type, yet they were not communicated.

AFTER engaging your Excellency's attention to the occurrences which took place in the city, it will not, I hope, be deemed a trespass on your time, to request it for a moment to those which occurred on Bedlow's Island.

THE Commissioners having used every means within their power, to guard the city against the spreading of malignant fever, turned their attention to the Lazaretto, in order to ascertain to what degree of hazard those were exposed, who were employed in removing the sick from the city, and from the different vessels, to the Island. To this end, the number of men employed (during the season) was limited to 8. These men, though often obliged necessarily to and lift carry the sick, suffered not, in the smallest degree, from their occupation.

IN the Hospital, there were eleven persons employed as nurses, attendants, &c. among all these, there was not one instance of Fever. Mr. Osborne, Surgeon to the garrison on Governor's Island, was prevailed upon to attend the sick on Bedlow's island, for a certain period ; and in a letter which he addressed to the Commissioners on his resigning his employment there, (which is transmitted for your Excellency's perusal) he gives a particular account of the state of

the Hospital, and expresses much satisfaction at seeing the good effects which cleanliness and ventilation had afforded it.

If there needed any other confirmation than what has occurred through the season, and happened within the knowledge of the Commissioners, it may be found in the following facts :

MR. CASE, of Newburgh in this state, and his comrade, were sent to the Hospital from the ship Margaret, captain Bebee, both sick of the Yellow-Fever. As soon as the situation of Mr. Case was made known to his friends, his mother and brother hastened to see him. Mrs. Case and her son were unlimited in their intercourse with their sick relation ; and Mrs. Case remained with him, and performed all the duties of an affectionate mother and tender nurse, to the moment of his death, which happened on the sixth day of his illness. His comrade recovered.—Mr. Case, before his death, was as yellow as an orange ; but neither the mother nor brother experienced the least indisposition in consequence of their visit to the Hospital.

Two men were, from certain circumstances, received into the Hospital, with fractured legs—they remained in the same apartment with those ill of Yellow-Fever, and neither of them took the disease.

THESE facts are from my own knowledge ; and impressed as I truly am with their importance, and particularly with the inferences which may be drawn from them, I cannot be too earnest in my attempts to impress them upon your Excellency.

It is at all times an arduous undertaking to conquer prejudices ; and it is commonly an unthankful office to rectify abuses which compel men to draw money from their pockets. The city of New-York,

which offers to its merchants the finest prospects of wealth, and to all its inhabitants the more pleasing one of health, if properly attended to, should be put in a situation which would render it capable of realizing both. The expence of doing this, is unworthy of notice, compared to the end when attained ;—nay, the very expence is but another means of enhancing the value of property, as well as of securing the comforts of life. The legislature then, in ninety seven, have been commendably employed in sanctioning a system, *which if completed*, must be attended with effects incalculably beneficial.

PERMIT me to repeat, that as I have personally known all the facts previously stated, as well with regard to the city as Lazaretto, and as I have personally conducted the operations of the Health-Office, I can vouch for their truth, and consider myself accountable for them.

BEING extremely desirous, as far as it is in my power, to render the establishment of the Health-Office, a real good to the people, I most heartily join the Commissioners in entreating your Excellency to make such a representation to the Legislature, as you may judge proper on this important subject.

You have been from time to time informed by the Commissioners of the last and of the present year, of the very unfit condition of the buildings on Bedlow's Island, to answer the purposes of a Lazaretto. I shall, therefore, only add, that there is the most pressing necessity for fixing the spot on which suitable and permanent buildings may be erected, so that the institution may be rendered as complete and useful as possible, before the ensuing season.

I WILL take my leave, by remarking to your Excellency, that the ready assistance which the Health Commissioners received from the Common Council,

in the execution of their several duties, greatly contributed to promote the measures of the Health Office.

I am, with entire respect,

Sir,

Your Excellency's

Most humble servant,

RICHARD BAYLEY.

[*Conclusion of Correspondence for 1797.*]

Extracts

FROM THE
CORRESPONDENCE OF 1798.

No. 44.

HEALTH-OFFICE,
New-York, April 2d, 1798.

TO THE MAYOR.

S I R,

THE Commissioners inclose for the consideration of the Common Council, a memorial from the inhabitants in the vicinity of the Common Sewer, at the lower end of Broad-street, complaining of it as a nuisance scarcely to be borne in hot weather.

THE Commissioners are convinced that this is a well-founded complaint, and ought to be remedied without delay; and they most cheerfully offer their aid in any measure the Common Council shall deem proper, to relieve the petitioners.

THE Commissioners take the liberty to remind the board of the necessity of compelling the inhabitants of the city generally, to mend their streets and side-walks. It will be almost impossible to keep them in decent order, without—and if it is deemed necessary to desig-

nate the particular places that require repairs, or accompany the Alderman of each ward in a review, they are ready to do either, on the first intimation.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,
JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 48.

HEALTH OFFICE, May 2d, 1798.

To John Jacob Lansing, Esq. Sheriff.

SIR,

A REPRESENTATION has been made to the Commissioners, that the present state of the Jail yard is exceptionable—in consequence of which, they, together with the Health Officer, visited it this morning, and are of opinion, that removing the rubbish daily, and keeping it as clean as possible hereafter, will not only conduce very greatly to the health and convenience of the family as well as the prisoners, but tend to prevent any bad effects upon the inhabitants in its vicinity, from an accumulation of offensive objects in the approaching warm season.

THEY are also of opinion, that if the walls of the different apartments, were repeatedly white-washed, it would purify the air of the prison, and render it more wholesome.

THE Commissioners, therefore, beg leave to call your attention to this interesting object; and trust, that immediate measures will be taken to preclude the danger apprehended.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 50.

Health-Office, May 7th, 1798.

[Delivered to Alderman Gabriel Furman.]

Various objects noticed by the Committee of the Corporation, and the Commissioners of the Health-Office, this morning, viz.—

JOHN Jacob Astor's and the adjacent vacant lot, and Thomas Brown's Blacksmith shop, Front-street, are in a state of perfect nuisance, and require filling up at least upon a range with the rear of the adjoining buildings.

THE whole side walk from Coenties to the Old-slip, South side of Front-street, requires to be renewed.

THE head of Coffee-House-slip wants clearing out with the machine; and the East side, from Front-street to the end of the wharf, to be paved.

THE rear of Thomas Marston's lot, next to Mrs. Bruce's, should be filled, and Mrs. Bruce's made level with Pine-street, and both so descending as to cast the water into the East river—within 14 days.

THE rear of Robert Bowne and Thomas Eddy's lots, East of Pine-street, to be filled by the same period. The pavement in front of their stores is sunken, and wants raising and repair.

THE street and side walks in front of Carey Ludlow's and William Byron's houses, are sunken, and want raising and new paving.

THE alley and rear of George Codwise's and George Bowne's lots, Front-street, should be filled and paved within 14 days—also, their alley, (Front-street) on the dock.

THE East side of Beekman-slip, in front of Mr. Rogers's stores, to the Bridge, wants paving.

Simon Schermerhorn's alley, between Capt. Motley's and the corner of Beekman-slip (Front-street) should be filled up with gravel.

UNDER Joshua Underhill's store, Front-street, next to Crane wharf, wants filling.

THE lower end of Walton's alley, above Peck-slip, from Water-street to Front-street, wants raising.

THE lower end of Archibald Gracie's and Samuel Ackerly's new wharf, should be filled up and finished.

IT IS ALSO NECESSARY,

To pave Water-street, between James and Catharine-slips, and South of Catharine slip, from the pavement to the bridge—to run abulk head across Catharine-slip, on a range with the South side of Water-street, West of the slip—to pave George-street from the North side of Lombard-street, to the dock on Cherry-street—and, level above Lombard-street, with gravel.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 54.

Health-Office, May 21st, 1758.

TO THE RECORDER.

(In the absence of the Mayor.)

SIR,

I TAKE the liberty to hand you the inclosed representation from the inhabitants in the neigh-

bourhood of the New slip, for the consideration of the Common Council ; and have only to observe, that the Commissioners who lately examined this slip, did not hesitate to pronounce it in a state of nuisance. However averse they may be to recommend the filling up of any one, from a knowledge of their great public utility, they are at a loss what other measure to suggest for obviating the danger feared, and quieting the alarms of the people in its vicinity. In a letter of the 26th of June last, this slip was represented by the Commissioners as in a state of nuisance.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 58.

Health-Office, June 23d, 1798.

TO THE MAYOR.

SIR,

THE Commissioners received the inclosed representation of Catherine slip, a few days ago.— They find it a receptacle of all kinds of filth, and, from its situation, must daily become more offensive. They, therefore, think it their duty to apprise the Common Council, that this case will require their authority and interposition.

THE Commissioners also inform the Board, that Thomas Marston has totally neglected to fill the rear of his lot, next to the estate of Robert and Peter Bruce, agreeable to the ordinance of Common Council ; and that it still remains in the situation it was when last reported.

THEY also inform the Board, that Mr. Delafield

has only partially complied with the order for filling under and in rear of his stores at Exchange slip.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 61.

Health-Office, August 6th, 1798.

TO THE MAYOR.

S I R,

THE unfinished situation of the docks in Front-street, between Coenties and the Old slip, generally, was, in the opinion of the Commissioners of the Health Office, a source of disease in that neighbourhood last year, and occasioned the death of several valuable citizens. At that period it became a subject of remonstrance to the Common Council.

THE Commissioners cannot sufficiently regret, that they have reason to renew their remonstrances on this subject, and that its present situation is likely to be productive of still greater evils than those of last year.

SEVERAL persons have sickened in the neighbourhood of these unfinished grounds within a week, and with symptoms strikingly characteristic of Yellow-Fever.

If the Common Council think proper to appoint two of their members, the Commissioners will meet

them early to-morrow morning, to concert measures adapted to the exigency of the case.

I am, respectfully,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

RICHARD BAYLEY, *Health-Officer.*

No. 176.

Health-Office, August 10th, 1798.

To his Excellency, Governor Jay.

S I R,

IT has been rumoured that the Yellow-Fever had made its appearance in town. It therefore seems proper that the Commissioners give your Excellency the earliest information of the facts which, in their opinion, have led to it.

IN the spring of last year, the Commissioners, in one of their reports to the Common Council, remarked that the whole east side of Front-street, from Coenties to the Old slip, was in an unfinished and otherwise exceptionable state; and that their interposition was necessary to prevent the evils which, in hot weather, might result from it. Some difficulty arose at the time, which suspended the reforms contemplated. A few solitary cases of violent fever and death occurred in the vicinity of that ground, in the course of last summer, which the Health-Officer and Commissioners have no doubt originated from the causes represented.

THEY expressed the same apprehensions in some of their subsequent reports to the Common Council; but fortunately nothing like a fever of a particular kind, has manifested itself in the whole city till within a few

days. Several inhabitants in the neighbourhood of these docks and open lots (which are yet receptacles of filth, dirt and carrion) have been attacked, all with similar complaints, and, we have no doubt, from the causes before enumerated. The greater part, however, are recovered or convalescent. The rest of the city is healthy. The Common Council have now taken such measures as, we hope, will remedy the evils apprehended from those sources, for the present.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 63.

Health Office, August 13, 1798.

*To Messrs. Robert and S. Bowne, and THIRTEEN others
holders of salted Provision.*

(C I R C U L A R.)

GENTLEMEN,

THE Commissioners are informed that quantities of putrid or spoiled Beef are now stored in different cellars of Pearl-street, and that the smell is very offensive to the neighbours. These facts are taken for granted; and as you have hitherto been in the practice of receiving salted provisions from your country friends, and may possibly have a stock on hand, the Commissioners suggest to you the propriety of having it examined by your packer, and of removing

from town such as may be found spoiled or unmerchantable.

With much respect, I am,
GENTLEMEN,
Your humble servant,
JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 71.

Health-Office, August 22d, 1798.

Mr. Newton, Builder.

SIR,

THE Commissioners of the Health-Office are informed, that you are preparing to build for Mr. Marston, and that his dock, next to Mr. Kip's new store, is breaking up for that purpose. They now inform you of sick people in every one of Mrs. Bruce's houses, from Water-street to the foot of Pine-street; and that instead of arresting the progress of the disease by covering the great mass of filth and corruption on Bruce and Marston's lots, with wholesome earth or gravel, you will, by exposing a greater surface of impurities, consisting of unwholesome earth and decayed timber, to the influence of the sun, necessarily increase the body of foul air in that neighbourhood.

THE Commissioners therefore *forbid* you to proceed in breaking up the old dock, until the other is filled agreeably to the ordinance of the Common Council.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT.

Health-Office, August 20th, 1793.

TO THE MAYOR.

S I R,

THE Commissioners, in discharge of their duty, inform the Common Council, that the great mass of filth at the head of Cuyler's and Astor's lots, between Coenties and the Old slip, in Front street, is covered—that the operation is progressing—and that the sickness in that neighbourhood, has nearly subsided.

THEY are sorry to inform the board, that the disease, which occurred at the New slip and in its vicinity, has not so fortunately terminated. Nine persons are reported to have died there—five to be still sick—and nine or ten recovered, or removed into the country. Every thing which prudence suggested, or exertion could perform for the indigent, has been done in the course of the last week, and at as moderate an expence as possible to the public.

THE uncommon large body of water on Lispenard's meadow, north of his house, has subsided only about ten inches since the rains on Tuesday last, by the ordinary drain. It is the opinion of the Health Officer, that as soon as the surface of the meadow gets exposed to the influence of the sun, the exhalations arising from it, will generate disease in that neighbourhood. He therefore recommends a more sudden draining of it. The Commissioners have no doubt but the board will take such order on this subject, as the exigency may require.

A NUMBER of the inhabitants have frequently expressed a wish, that carts might be employed to take up the garbage and other offals, which, by standing in

confined places, from one sweeping day to another, become exceedingly offensive. The Commissioners have reflected more seriously on this subject, since the great heats set in, and believe it would be adviseable to remove them every Monday, Thursday and Saturday. They find that some of the Scavengers will perform this service by the day. If the board approve of an experiment, the Commissioners will agree with five men for the days above-mentioned till the last of September, as cheap as possible. They do not expect to exceed 12s. per day for each.

I am, &c.
JOHN OOTHOUT, *Chairman.*

No. 74.

Health-Office, August 28, 1798.

TO THE GOVERNOR.

S I R,

IN our last of the tenth inst. we stated to your Excellency, that a disease had appeared in Front-street, between Coenties and the Old-slip. We are happy to say it has since entirely subsided, and that the persons who had sickened, are all recovered.

It would give us much pleasure to announce that no case of apprehension had since arisen ; but, unhappily, about that period, some cases of sickness occurred at the New-slip, east of Dover-street—the 16th inst. at the foot of Pine-street, west of the Fly-marker—and about the 20th inst. at the lower end of John and Cliff-streets ;—at which places, but particularly the latter, it is attended with considerable mortality. Individual cases have also appeared in different parts of the town, principally in unventilated situations.

WE thought it our duty to state these facts to your Excellency, and have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,
JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

No. 76.

Health-Office, August 30, 1798.

To PHILIP FULKERTSON,

S I R,

THE Commissioners request that you will attend at every store and cellar where salted provisions are deposited, and see that whatever is condemned, by the inspectors, as spoiled, be sent out of town, or into the stream of the river, at such distance from shore, as you shall judge consistent with the safety of the town.

THE Commissioners are informed, that the goodness of provisions can be ascertained with great certainty, by only boring into the barrel with a gimblet. This they take for granted.—You will therefore not suffer it to be tried in any other way.—Do not be sparing in the use of quick lime, where you find the cellars offensive.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT.

Health-Office, September 5th, 1798.

To Messrs. *Thomas Pearfall and Son.*

GENTLEMEN,

THE Commissioners again beg

you will employ a packer to examine your salted provisions. This may be done by boring a small hole in each barrel, in the cellar or store where it lies ; and whatever is found damaged, you will please to have removed out of town, without further delay.

I am, &c.

JOHN COTHOUT.

THE above letter was also sent to three other holders of provisions.

Health-Office,

September 14, 1793.

Mr. Thomas Pearfall.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received your favour of the 7th inst. and am sorry to inform you, that heavy complaints are continually made to us against the smell of putrid salted provisions, generally. There is no doubt but it is daily becoming worse. To continue such masses of animal putrefaction in town, which the Physicians agree is a considerable cause of extending the existing calamity, would be an unpardonable neglect.

THE Commissioners, therefore, beg you will inform them by the bearer, at what places yours are stored, the quantity on hand, and finally, that you will give them immediate and explicit information where to have it sent, under the direction of such person as you may order to take charge of it.

CANNOT you find some place along the east river

to store it ? This would greatly facilitate its removal by boats.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

Health-Office, September 15th, 1798.

GABRIEL FURMAN, Esq.

Chairman of the Health-Committee.

S I R,

ON the 13th August, the Commissioners recommended, in the strongest terms, to such holders of salted provisions in Pearl and other streets, as they were informed of, to examine them ; and to remove out of town, or cast into the stream of the river, whatever was found unmerchantable or spoiled. Similar requests in writing were immediately made to such other holders of provision as came to their knowledge on any subsequent days. Mr. Fulkertson was employed, to attend to the prompt execution of this important object. Inclosed is a list of proprietors who have willingly complied—also a list of such cellars, the proprietors of which are out of town, and which cannot be examined, nor the provisions removed by their consent. The Commissioners therefore submit to the serious consideration of the Magistrates, what measures, with respect to the latter, will be most proper in the present emergency. They inclose Mr. Pearfall's letters on the subject for perusal.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

Health-Office, September 18th, 1798.

GABRIEL FURMAN, Esq.

S I R,

ON a representation from the keeper of the gaol this morning, that a black man was ill of fever there, Dr. Anderson was requested to visit him. Inclosed is his report. As the Commissioners do not conceive themselves authorized to remove prisoners, they beg leave to refer the case to the Magistracy.

JACOB ABRAMSE,

C. H. O.

HEALTH OFFICE, *September 22, 1798.*

Mr. THOMAS PEARSALL.

Respected Friend,

THE removal of all spoiled provisions from town, is now become indispensibly necessary, for the preservation of the lives of our remaining fellow-citizens, independent of the continual clamours against the offensive smells arising from it.

You are therefore required to appoint a person to open your cellars, as well as that of the house of Pearsall and Pell, containing salted provisions, on Monday morning the 24th inst. for the purpose of having the whole inspected, and whatever may be found spoiled, removed out of town, to such place as you may direct.

THIS important business must not be delayed beyond the time limited—If it is, our duty will compel us to proceed immediately after, agreeable to the directions of the law passed the 30th of March last.

THE Commissioners, therefore, beseech you to prevent this disagreeable extremity. Mr. Honson, the inspector, has examined several parcels. His mode of trying, is by boring into the cask with a small gimblet. If good, it remains in the cellar—if bad, he casts it into the stream of the river.

IF you cannot provide a person to undertake this business, the Commissioners of the Health-Office will, at your expence, engage Mr. Honson, and Mr. Fulkertson, a constable, to accomplish it, on receiving your instructions for that purpose.

Your answer is requested by the bearer.

I am, Sir,
Your assured friend,
JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

Health-Office, September 23d, 1798.

THIS morning a letter was received from Mr. Thomas Pearfall, without date, in reply to that of Commissioners of 22d. Inclosed was one for John A. Honson, packer of provisions, which was delivered him, and is in the words following:—

Respected Friend,

I AM requested by the Chairman of the Commissioners of the Health-Office, to have all the salted provisions belonging to our house, and Pearfall and Pell's, examined by boring a hole in each cask. As the Chairman has mentioned thy name as having examined a considerable quantity of provisions, it is very agreeable to me, and my wish that thou should examine all the provisions I am interested in. I will, therefore, thank thee to undertake it as soon a possi-

ble. I also request thou wilt get sufficient assistance to put it up again in good order. If there should be any provisions spoiled, take down the marks ; and where there are no marks, take down the brand, and keep the marks of ours and Pearfall and Pell's separate.—If any pork should be condemned, I will have that cartee here, if agreeable to the Commissioners.

I am thy friend,
THOMAS PEARSALL.

P. S. Thomas Pearfall and Co.'s provisions are principally in Thomas Burling's cellar—some in Rofs's cellar in John street. Pearfall and Pell's provisions are in a cellar in John street—I believe Ashe's. Z. Sickles has the key of Burling's cellar. The rest of the keys cannot be come at—they must therefore be broken open and locked again. Thomas Smith, Blacksmith, in Dey-street is my Smith, if *wanted*.

The following was written Mr. Pearfall, in consequence of his letter to Mr. Honson, forbidding him to proceed in the examination of his provisions :

HEALTH-OFFICE,
New-York, September 27th, 1798.

MR. THOMAS PEARSALL.

Respected Friend,

YOUR favor of the 26th inst. has been received, and that inclosed handed Mr. Honson.

He assures us that agreeably to your instructions, every cask in Rofs's cellar, No. 63, John-street, was first bored, and that he found a number good, which

remain in the cellar ; but the spoiled he has taken on board a vessel to examine, and when finished, he will replace them in the cellar. This is going on as expeditiously, and, we believe, as well as possible.

WE have invariably attended to your interest in this business, and have no reason to think Mr. Honson is influenced by any other motive. If, however, there is any other packer whom you prefer, we can have no objection to his being employed ; as Mr. Honson was proposed merely because he was in town, and had been in the constant practice of examining provisions for different Merchants.

WE are told that provisions have been improperly condemned and destroyed by barely boring—it, therefore, is certainly most for your interest, and best, to examine it in the manner practised by Mr. Honson.

IN consequence, however, of your orders, we have advised him to call on you, and explain all his proceedings. We have only to add, that the whole *must* be forthwith examined, and the bad removed from town. We should be extremely sorry to be compelled to have it taken out and sent you.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

Health-Office, September 29th, 1798.

Messrs. James and Gilbert Woodhull.

GENTLEMEN,

COMPLAINTS have been made of a most offensive smell issuing from the cellar of the

house No. 61, John-street, containing provisions.—We are told it has been opened for the purpose of airing; but, as the effects of it are said to already have been serious, its remaining there longer is now dreaded. The Commissioners think it should be examined without delay. The bearer, Mr. JOHN A. HONSON, has lately been much engaged in such business. He is at present, we believe, the only inspector in town. We mention him to you, and think he will do ample justice. The spoiled must be sent out of town at all events.

I am, &c.

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

Extract of a letter from the Commissioners of the Health Office, to his Excellency, Governor Jay, dated

December 11, 1798.

“ THAT the Fever received *additional* malignancy from the spoiled provisions stored in town, the Commissioners will admit; but they possess evidence sufficiently strong to induce them to believe, that it *arose* from other causes—namely, decayed docks, foul slips, lengthy sewers, and generally, the new-made, funken and unfinished grounds on the east river; and that the foul air of spoiled beef, pork, and fish, which is the worst of the three, as well as every other impurity, served only to encrease the poison of the atmosphere, and extend its destructive influence:—for, in several streets, leading from those sources (and where no provisions were stored) the Fever appeared first, and, in its effects, proved equally mortal.

UNDER these impressions, the Commissioners fear,

that until great reformatiions take place with respect to the sources mentioned, there will be no security against a similar scourge, whenever the heat and moisture of the air, shall prove equally favourable to bring the hidden seeds of pestilence into action."

Health Office,

December 15th, 1798.

S I R,

THE Commissioners will thank you to inform them, whether any instances of infection occurred among the attendants at Bellevue Hospital, during your residence at that place:—and if there did, be so good as to mention the cases; the circumstances which, in your opinion gave rise to them; and in particular, the cause to which your attack is to be attributed.

I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN OOTHOUT, Chairman.

DR. ISAAC S. DOUGLASS, }

Medical attendant at Bellevue. }

New-York, December 17th, 1798.

S I R,

AS it is the request of the Commissioners of the Health Office, that I should inform them of the state of Bellevue Hospital during my residence there; as also, point out particularly the source from whence I supposed the fever with which I was so violently attacked, arose, I think it my duty to state to them a few circumstances, and explain the manner in which I conceive my disease to have originated.

My attendance commenced on the 12th of June last. From that period, to the 14th of November, there were admitted into the Hospital, 389 patients, of which number perhaps three fourths were sick with pestilential fevers. The nurses employed during the same period, were 16 in number. The Health Office boatmen, who were in the habit of bringing the sick to the Hospital, as well from the city as shipping, were accustomed to enter the Hospital at all times, and assist in placing as well as removing the sick from room to room. The number of Washerwomen during the season, was 7. Several persons were also constantly employed in cooking, preserving cleanliness, and burying the dead. There were, besides, transient people, near relations of the sick, who were permitted by the Commissioners to visit occasionally. Several persons accompanied their friends to Bellevue, staid with them, and nursed them during their illness. Under all these circumstances, to my knowledge, there happened no instance of infection, altho' an opinion has been adopted by many, that my sickness, whilst residing at Bellevue Hospital, arose from infection, imbibed at that place.

To what cause, then, is to be attributed the Fever with which I was seized at Bellevue on the 5th of October ?

HAVING occasion to visit my friends in New-York, three days previous to my illness, and having unfortunately slept in an highly infected part of the city, no doubt can exist with me, but it arose from that cause. In making the declaration, I must remark to you, that the situation of the medical attendants at Bellevue, was by no means a propitious one. Before the new buildings were erected for the accommodation of the sick, the Physician's room, (the only one they had) was literally surrounded by them. The room adjoining,—the front and back piazas—the hall—the rooms and hall in the second story—a room in the cellar

that had been used for a kitchen, all contained sick. —THEY were, likewise, placed in several Chinese summer houses, in the small space between the main-house and the east river; and in the building erected for the purpose of a bathing-house. A large canvas was also erected (for want of a more convenient place) under the windows of the south-west part of the house, for the reception of the dying and the dead. I add, Sir, that under all the disadvantages enumerated, I know of no instance where infection resulted.

PERMIT me to conclude, by expressing the thanks due to the polite and humane attention of the Commissioners to myself, and to the sick in general; and I feel a pride in acknowledging, that to them—the generous and persevering exertions of my preceptor, Dr. RICHARD BAYLEY, and the interposition of a kind Providence, I am indebted for my *life*.

With the greatest respect,
I am, Sir,
Your most obedient and
Humble servant,
ISAAC S. DOUGLASS.

*John Oothout, Esq. }
C. C. H. Office. }*

To the Common Council of the city of New-York.

Health-Office, December 4th, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

IN addition to the facts which are contained in the correspondence between the Health Commissioners and the Common Council for the year 1798, I shall offer to your consideration a few remarks upon the origin and progress of the pestilential disease which has lately prevailed in this city; and in order to cor-

roborate what I may advance, I shall, in the first place take a retrospect of events which have annually taken place in this city during the warm months since the year 1795.

ACCORDING to the records of the Health Office, the Yellow Fever appeared in 1796 at White-hall, at the foot of Pine-street, at Burling-slip, and in the neighbourhood of Rosevelt-street sewer.

IN 1797 between Coenties and the Old-slip, in Front-street, at the Fly-market in several instances, in Fletcher-street, at Burling-slip, in Water-street, adjoining Rosevelt-street sewer, in George-street, and at the foot of Pine-street.

IN 1798 the disease first appeared about midway between Coenties and the Old-slip, in Front-street, between the 1st and 7th of August. On the 7th August about twenty-three were reported sick to the Health-Office. From that period several others sickened, and of the whole number one died. By the 26th of August, the complaint had disappeared in that quarter in consequence of the measures taken to remove the cause, by covering the offensive lots with clean, wholesome earth.

ON the 12th of August, it appeared at No. 283, Water-street, in the case of Mr. Taylor, in an old broken building, on an unfinished lot at the foot of Dover-street, in which 11 persons died early in 1795, and which has since been repeatedly represented as a nuisance.

AUGUST 12, also, the disease appeared in the case of John Henderson, corner of James-street and Batavia lane. On all sides of his residence, which was a small crowded building, there were stinking lots in an unfinished state.

AGAIN, on August 12, the disease appeared in

William Whitlock, Cardmaker, No. 51, Cherry-street. In the rear and to the south of his residence, the lots are very generally below the level of the streets, and without drains.

August 13. Murdock M'Lean, Bruce's wharf, was seized, where the disease has regularly made its appearance every warm season since the year 1795.

THE first arrival of sick in this harbour (to the knowledge of the Health-Office) from Philadelphia, was on the 13th of August, in the New-York and Philadelphia Packet. The Captain died on the passage—the Mate was sick and was sent to Bellevue.

August 17. Tho. Collard sickened in Banker-street.

18. Nehemiah Fowler John-street.

20. Fletcher-str.

21. R. Whitmore George-street

22. A. Sharplefs corner of John and Cliff-str.

FROM the preceding statement, the Yellow Fever made its appearance in different parts of the city on the same day, and in the course of six or eight days, in different streets, remote from one another.

ON the 8th August the Mercury in Farenheit's Thermometer, at an elevation of 40 feet above the ground, and in the shade, at two P. M. stood at 91 degrees. }

On the 9th.	96	}
10th.	90	
11th.	89	
12th.	86	
13th.	83*	

* The highest to which the Mercury rose in July 1795, was 83 }

August	93	}
July 1796,	88	
August	89	}
July 1797,	90	
August	82	}
July 1798,	94	
August	96	}

ON the morning of the 14th, the heaviest rain fell of any time during the year. It began at 5 A. M. and continued without intermission till nine. Numerous cellars, particularly those in the low parts of the city, were filled with water. Lispenard's meadow, which may be considered as within the limits of the city, was entirely overflowed. In six days it had not subsided above ten inches ; and the water did not pass off, till a large drain was opened for that purpose, by order of the Common Council.

AFTER the immense fall of rain on the 14th, the Thermometer, which had fallen on that day to 78, rose

On the 15th to	82	}
16th	85	
17th	90	
18th	90	

THE sudden and great increase of heat immediately after the violent rain, appeared to have a proportionate influence in producing fever. Between that period and the 22d August, upwards of twenty persons in Cliff-street, were seized with slight indispositions, which they attributed to sleeping with open windows during the preceding hot and moist weather, but which appeared rather as the forerunner of yellow fever, for, not only the persons thus indisposed, but a number of others in the same street, had that disease in the course of a few days.

FROM this period the disease became more general ; but its fatality was principally felt in Cliff-street and its neighbourhood, at Catharine slip, in Water-street, and on the unfinished grounds in the southern part of the city.

Now, having seen that the yellow fever has made its appearance in New-York every year, for several years past, but has prevailed in very different degrees, it becomes a matter of great importance to determine,

why the disease was so generally prevalent on the low new-made grounds in this city in 1795, whilst it was scarcely felt in the more elevated situations; why, in 1796 and 1797, its appearance was limited to particular spots; and why, in 1798 it not only prevailed on all the new-made grounds, but also in parts of the city which had before been exempted from the disease.

To answer these questions in such manner, as to prove satisfactory to every one, might be a very difficult task. I shall, however, offer some reasons which may tend to shew why the fever was more prevalent this year, than in the preceding years.

It is well ascertained that in the year 1795, there was an unusual degree of heat and moisture in the atmosphere during the warmer months—that the Thermometer was considerably higher than in 1796 and 1797, but that in 1798, the heat greatly exceeded that of 1795.

Now, as heat and moisture are powerful agents in *producing* pestilential diseases, so must the same causes necessarily promote the *extension* of those diseases.

In the year '98, there were besides, local causes of fever in this city, which did not exist in the other seasons, and which, co-operating with the weather, served to extend the disease beyond the limits, to which it would probably have been otherwise confined. I have reference to the immense quantities of spoiled beef, fish, and other articles of a perishable nature which were stored in different parts of this city. The noxious exhalations arising from these sources, in my apprehension was a great cause why, the disease arose and raged with great violence in particular situations: And when we consider the sudden appearance of the fever on Golden-Hill and in Cliff-street, and the great number which sickened

nearly at the same time, there is great reason to believe this opinion well founded.

ABOUT the 20th of August, a report was made to the Health Office, that great quantities of spoiled beef were stored in Pearl-street, between Burling and Beekman-slips. The stench which issued from some of the cellars in this situation, was so considerable, as to prove very offensive to those who passed by, and became a subject of general observation. Letters, in consequence, from the Health Office, were addressed to the owners of provisions in that quarter, enjoining them to have the beef examined, and to have such as was spoiled, sent out of the city. Instead, however, of adopting this plan, the beef was brought from the cellars into the street, the barrels opened, and the putrid pickle thrown into the gutters. In some instances the examination was made in the cellars, and the pickle disposed of in the same manner. The gutters which conveyed away this putrid pickle, led to Burling-slip sewer.

THE relative situation of this sewer, and Cliff-street is such that the southerly and south-easterly winds, force a current of air through the sewer, carrying with it the exhalations arising from the noxious matters collected together in that place, and having a direction to pass more immediately up Golden-Hill, and into Cliff-street; and every person in that neighbourhood with whom I have conversed, agrees as to the offensive smell of the air, previous to the appearance of the fever.

ON the 20th of August, the wind, which had been blowing from the north and west some days previous, shifted to the south-east, and continued to blow from that quarter some time. In 48 hours after this, there was scarcely a house in Pearl-street, near where the spoiled provisions were stored, in the lower end of

John-street, and in Cliff-street, which did not contain sick.

THE sudden appearance of fever in this part of the city, and the great number which were affected in so short a time, proves the local nature of the cause ; and to the one which I have just mentioned, I have no hesitation, in ascribing all the effects which were experienced.

IF what we have alledged, be admitted sufficient to explain the appearance of Fever which took place in Cliff-street, &c. we have made some advances towards accounting for the general prevalence of the disease in 1798.*

BUT, Gentlemen, we have further to remark, a particular difference in the warm seasons of 1798 and 1795.

IN 1795 the weather was warm and moist, but there was but very little rain.

IN 1798, the weather was not only much warmer, but was accompanied with sudden and heavy rains.

IMMEDIATELY after the rains, the Public papers teemed with addresses to the citizens, entreating them to empty their cellars of the water which had collected in them, or the most fatal effects would be felt from neglect, or inattention to this circumstance.—It is not my intention to dispute the opinion advanced by these writers. But, if the production of disease, was to be apprehended from the lodgment of water in places where the sun's rays never enter, what effects were to be expected from the ponding of water in those numerous lots and yards within this city,

* Vide the H. Office correspondence on the subject of spoiled provisions.

which are several feet below the level of the streets, containing dead animal and vegetable matters, and to which the rays of the sun have full access? I wish you, Gentlemen, to reflect seriously upon this comparison, and believe, that whilst those sunken, undrained lots are suffered to remain in their present state, unless causes cease to produce their effects, diseases must inevitably result.

ON examining the records of the Legislature of this state, it will be found, that petitions have been preferred to that body, for permission to erect mill-dams on certain streams of water in some of the northern counties, and the prayer of the petitioners has been granted. The consequence was, that considerable tracts of low grounds in the neighbourhood of the mill-dams, were overflowed in the spring, and after the water had passed off, and the surface of those grounds were exposed to the influence of the sun, exhalations of so baneful a nature arose, as to produce a fever of the bilious type, which attacked almost every body within a certain distance from their source, and proved very mortal in its effects. The cause of this sickness being so obvious, petitions were presented to the Legislature, praying for a redress of the grievances. To correct the evil, it of course was necessary to destroy the mill-dams, and as soon as the waters were unobstructed and allowed to flow in their usual channel, the country became as healthy as before.

PERMIT me, Gentlemen, to ask the following questions:—If the result of exhalations arising from grounds which have been covered with water in an open country, has been the production of bilious remitting fevers, attended with considerable mortality, what result ought we to expect from those exhalations which arise from the ponding of water on 150 acres of low grounds and sunken yards and lots in a crowded city, and of a southern aspect?

BEFORE I conclude, I shall take the liberty of noticing some of the public measures that have been adopted for the removal of causes of disease in this city. I shall confine myself to two principal objects :

First. THE want of a sufficient descent on the low grounds along the east river, to carry off the waters from the streets, is generally admitted. A considerable quantity of water must necessarily stagnate in the gutters of these streets, and also in the sunken pavement. In dry weather, this lodgement consists principally of water which has been used for culinary and other family purposes, and must therefore, be supposed to abound with matters to afford noxious exhalations.

By an ordinance of the Corporation for cleaning the streets, the inhabitants are directed to scrape out the dirt and filth collected in the gutters and heap them up in the streets, to be removed by the scavengers *in the course of the day.*

Now, does this regulation in any degree subserve the purposes for which it was ordained? Does not the spreading of this dirt and filth, and exposing new and greater surfaces, increase the mischief which the measure was intended to correct? I believe, gentlemen, there will be found no other means to rid the low grounds of this city, from the baneful effects of stagnant waters, and an accumulation of noxious matters, than their being freely washed by currents of water flowing over them.

2d. IN the same ordinance, the citizens are prohibited from throwing into the streets, from their respective houses, cellars, or yards any dirt, filth, or offals whatever, except on certain days. How will this be found, to operate in *removing* the causes of disease? Should we not rather ask, how this will be found to operate in *increasing* the causes of disease? One mo-

ment's reflection, I presume, will convince us that some means ought to be adopted to remedy a system so fraught with mischief, and for these means I take the liberty of referring you to letter 70, addressed by the Commissioners of the Health-Office to the Common Council.

I have the honor to be,
GENTLEMEN,
Your most obedient and
Humble servant,

R. BAYLEY, *Health-Officer.*



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